

M LAFITTE: *M*

J J Gifford

THE PIRATE OF THE GULF.

BY THE AUTHOR

OF

“THE SOUTH WEST.”

“A chief on land—an outlaw on the deep.”

“He left a Corsair’s name to other times,
Link’d with one virtue and a thousand crimes.”

BYRON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS,

NO. 82 CLIFF-STREET.

MDCCCXXXVI.

1836

[Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1836,
by HARPER & BROTHERS, in the Clerk's Office of the Southern
District of New-York.]

TO
PROFESSOR LONGFELLOW,
THESE VOLUMES
ARE
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E .

THE leading incidents upon which the present work is founded, are chiefly historical.

With the pages of history, however, we have had to do, only so far as they could be made subservient to our tale, which does not profess to be, exclusively a tale, or history, of the times to which it is referred, but of an individual in some degree connected with them.

Nor with the faithfulness of a biographer, have we portrayed the life of the personage whom we have taken for our hero. We have woven for our purpose a web of fact and fiction, unsolicitous to dye each thread with its own peculiar hue, to enable the curious reader thereby, the more readily to say which is which. But if he chooses to draw out either thread, to inspect it by itself, thinking thereby to judge better of the texture of the whole, we have only to say—the web is his own; and, that if his humour prompt him to break up the watch, the pieces may perhaps reward his curiosity, if they do not demonstrate his wisdom.

New-York, June, 1836.

*A fitting preface for a work of such a kind,
composed of weak imaginings of a
still weaker mind*



BOOK I.

BOYHOOD.

CHILDE HAROLD was he hight :—but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say ;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day :
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time ;
Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lines of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

* * * *

Oh, Love! what is it in this world of ours
Which makes it fatal to be loved !

* * * *

The Childe departed from his father's halls.

BYRON.



LAFITTE:

THE PIRATE OF THE GULF.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

"Fame sometimes gives her votaries visions of their future destiny, while yet in early life. There is then a sort of sympathy created between their youthful aspirations and coming deeds—a reflection of the future upon the present."—EDGORTH.

AN EXILE'S HOME—RIVER SCENERY—AMBITIOUS MUSINGS.

IN a secluded and richly-wooded amphitheatre, formed by a crescent of green-clad hills, among which the romantic Kennebeck wanders to the ocean, there stood, until within a recent period, the ruins of a stately mansion. Its blackened walls were enamelled with dark-green velvet moss, and mantled with creeping vines, as if Nature, with a gentle hand, had striven to conceal the devastations of ruthless Time.

Huge chimneys, terminating in fantastic turrets, heavy cornices, deep mouldings and panel-work, combined with the costly and elaborate architecture of the whole venerable structure, indicated a relic of that substantial age immediately subsequent to the revolutionary war:—an age, although then in

its decline, as eminently characterised by moral and physical stability as the present by their opposites. That, was an age of iron—this, of tinsel.

At the period with which our tale is more intimately connected, the handsome edifice of which these melancholy ruins were both the monument and mausoleum, reared its lofty walls amid a grove of oaks, whose hoary bodies, and the majestic spread of their gnarled and giant limbs, while they told of their great age—numbered by centuries, not years—bore testimony to the dignity and grandeur of the primeval forest, of which they were alone the representatives. Here and there, among these sylvan patriarchs, glistened the silvery trunk of the classic beech, intermingled with the dark cone of the gloomy pine, and the tall, spiral poplar, swaying its graceful head in the breeze.

Beneath the thickly interlaced branches of these trees, and sloping gently to the pebbly shore of the river, lay, out-rolled, a lawn of the thickest verdure. Its green and quiet beauty was relieved and enlivened by half a score of ruminating, well-conditioned cows, standing or reclining in those luxurious attitudes indicative of comfort and repose, and a small flock of long-fleeced sheep, of a rare and valued breed, was dispersed in picturesque groups under the more venerable trees. A gracefully formed jennet, conjuring up visions of lovely woman, in velvet hat, nodding plumes and generous robes sweeping the earth, which the spirited animal beneath her disdains with his delicate hoofs—a beautiful, slender-limbed saddle-horse—and a brace of coal black ponies, with long tails and flowing manes, which are at once associated with boys and holidays—stood together in a social group beside a small but romantic lake in the midst of the wood. They were mutually reclining their heads upon one another's necks, each manifesting his sportive

feelings, by occasionally fixing his large white teeth into the glossy hide of his neighbour.

This pellucid sheet of water was spanned by a fantastic bridge of tressel-work, suspended with the lightness of a spider's web, from one green bank to the other. It connected a broad gravelled avenue, which, commencing at the river, wound among the trees, yielding to the natural undulations of the grounds, and terminated at a spacious flight of steps leading to the piazza of the mansion, the two fronts of which were ornamented by a light colonnade of eight slender Ionic columns. Tall windows—hung with rich curtains of orange-coloured damask and snowy muslin, costly with deep broideries of oak leaves, large as the life, and curiously wrought with silken floss, in their autumn hues of green and yellow—extended quite to the floor of the piazza, and, defended by venetian blinds, served as the only entrances to the interior, from the front.

The house faced to the west, and commanded an extensive prospect of the river, sweeping boldly around the peninsula upon which it was situated, and forming at the distance of half a mile, and directly in front, a noble bend, remarkable for the extreme beauty of its curvature. Beyond, ascending to the horizon, as they retreated from the eye, spread cultivated farms, studded with low, black, farm-houses and huge barns; more remotely, dense black forests blended with the bases of a chain of low, blue mountains, known as the Monmouth hills, which, while they confined the prospect, constituted a magnificent back-ground to the picture.

At the north and south, the view was shut in by alternately cultivated or thickly-wooded hills and rocky eminences, retreating on either hand from the river in a semicircular from, to a little less than a mile in the rear, and enclosing the dwelling and grounds in a spacious vale or glen, which, also

embraced on the western side by the curve of the river, presented an area nearly circular in its shape.

Political events in sunny France,—that great political index of this revolutionizing age—in which the proprietor of this lovely domain bore no ordinary share, compelled him to seek a land where he could cherish his liberal principles with safety, and educate his twin-sons to act their part honourably and with distinction on the theatre of life. And where should the expatriated old soldier bend his footsteps but to the shores of America? Daughter of Europe! Yet she opens her arms to receive her exiled children, with the affection of a young mother. Noble and glorious land! the errors of the old world shall be redeemed in thee—and, although the continents of the east have been enrolled, century after century, upon the scroll of history, yet their history is ended—thine only begun; and dark and guilty as are ITS pages, shall THINE be bright and pure!

Orphans from their birth, his sons never knew their mother. The hour which ushered them into existence ushered her spirit into heaven. Strangers to maternal love, and educated, since the exile of their stern parent, in almost monastic seclusion, they early attained an uncommon maturity of mind and firmness of character, combined with manly sentiments and a habit of thinking independently, early taught them by their father's example, and inculcated, cultivated, and wrought out to maturity by him, with untiring assiduity.

Their fifteenth birth-day arrived, and although in years they numbered equally, both in mind, and person, and habits, they were wholly dissimilar. Achille, the eldest of the twins, had attained dignity of mind and manly beauty of person, far in advance of his years. Tall and finely proportioned, he was the youthful image of his noble father.

Proud, aspiring and ambitious, with a spirit that spurned severity, but yielded to gentleness, he acted from impulse rather than from reflection or a sense of duty, while a mine of passions, never yet sprung, existed like a slumbering volcano in his bosom. It required but a spark to produce a conflagration that should feed upon and torture him like another Prometheus, or burn on, extinguishable only with life.

That spark was at length elicited by his brother, an amiable boy of a gentler nature, retiring in his habits, mild and quiet in disposition. The reverse of Achille, he was apparently as meek as his brother was spirited. The former resembled his father; but Henri represented his mother and all her gentler virtues. Not only did he represent the excellences of her heart and mind, but her lovely image was revived in his beautiful countenance; and, as year after year unfolded in his youthful face the more striking and perfect resemblance his graceful features bore to those of his deceased mother, the father recognized the features of the fair girl who had won his early affections, and whom, during the few short months he had owned her as a bride, he had worshipped with religious devotion.

Notwithstanding the contrarieties of character exhibited by the brothers, they grew up together, mutually interchanging all those amiable kindnesses which are the offspring of fraternal affection. Achille was the stronger, physically and intellectually, and unconsciously to the subject, exerted that wonderful influence over Henri which mind often asserts over mind. He was his guide in his studies, his leader in sports, his enticer into dangers, and his assistant in the thousand petty difficulties of childhood. He loved him with a sincere and devoted attachment, fervently reciprocated by his warm-hearted and unsophisticated brother. But

their mutual affection was the principle which unites the vine and the oak. His brother's love was to Henri sufficient happiness, the stay of his clinging affections; and on the other hand, his kind and endearing attachment, by drawing out the kindlier feelings of his brother's sterner nature, rendered him better and happier.

The morning which ushered in their fifteenth birth-day was bright and cloudless—a more beautiful never dawned upon the earth. Could the tempter have chosen such a day to enter paradise? Yet on this day his presence was first felt in their peaceful home.

Achille was standing in the south window of his father's library, which opened upon the piazza, his person half-concealed by the rich drapery, gazing out upon the limpid river as it glided silently past, bearing upon its waveless bosom the single-masted sloop with its huge mainsail, the more graceful and bird-like schooner, her white canvass extended on either side like wings, the lofty, square-rigged merchantman, and swan-like sail-boat; their sails flashing back the morning sun, or changing to a dark hue as they moved in the black shadows thrown from overhanging cliffs.

The green meadows beyond the river, sprinkled with flocks, faded into the blue haze which floated around the distant hills. The air was alive with melody from a myriad of glad birds, climbing the rosy skies, and emulating the poised lark thrilling forth his matin-song to the rising sun. There was a charm of beauty, peace and rural happiness thrown over nature. Her works breathed inspiration, and spoke that morning in the sweetest accents to his heart. But he heeded not her language. A voice, softer-toned and more eloquent pleaded to his soul. It was the voice of ambition. Of boyish ambition it is true, but still ambition in her loftiest

mood. In years but a boy, the sterner spirit of a man dwelt in the swelling bosom of the youthful aspirant. Visions of the unveiled future, wherein appeared pageants of conquering armies, thrones, and scenes of vast dominion flitted before his youthful imagination ; and in the leader of the armies, the occupant of the thrones, the controller of empires, he recognized HIMSELF !

CHAPTER II.

"The love or hatred of brothers and sisters, is more intense than the love or hatred existing between any other persons of the same sexes. Probably, nothing so frequently causes divisions between those whom nature has blessed with the holy relationship of brother and sister, perhaps that it may be the depository of pure affection, as an unequal distribution of the affection of parents."—H. MORE.

AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN FATHER AND SON—A CATASTROPHE—RE-
MORSE.

"ACHILLE!"

The young aspirant started from the contemplation of scenes of triumph and empire, carnage and blood—the last too soon to be realized—and beheld his father standing by his side, who had entered the library and approached him unperceived. Seating himself in the recess of the window he motioned his son to a chair, placed opposite to his own. The bearing of the veteran exile, was at all times in the highest degree dignified and imposing. His was the brow, eye, and presence to command respect and receive homage.

The affection of Achille towards his father was not unmingled with sentiments of fear. But he was the only being before whom the proud eye of the boy quailed!

That his father loved him he had never doubted. He knew that he was proud of him, "his noble, fearless boy," as he would term him, while parting the dark clustering locks from his handsome fore-

head, after he had performed some daring feat of boyhood. But when he spoke to Henri, the gratified and proud expression of his eye softened under the influence of a milder feeling, and his smile would fade into a sweet but melancholy expression; nor would Achille have exchanged his inspiring language to him, "his daring boy!" for the kind tone, and manner he involuntarily assumed when he would say, "Henri, my beloved child, come and amuse me with your prattle!"—nor would the tearful eye, as he gazed down into the upturned face of the amiable boy, have pleased his wild spirit like the endearing glance of that admiring eye, when turned upon him in paternal pride. Achille translated his glance of pride into an expression of love, and sympathized with one so evidently regarded with an air of sorrow, if not pity, as his brother. If he gave the subject a moment's reflection it resulted in the flattering conviction that he himself was the favourite son.

But on the morning which introduces him to our notice, he had to learn too painfully, that Henri was the favourite child of the old soldier's affection, and that so far from loving him but a little less, he loved him *not*. That look of affection which he had translated as an expression of compassion for the gentler nature of his brother, he had to learn was an expression of the intensest parental affection. In his brother, his father worshiped the image of his departed wife, and all his affection for her, which the cold hand of death had withered in its beauty and bloom, was renewed in his beloved Henri. He was doubly loved—for his mother and for himself—and there remained for Achille, so the sensitive and high spirited boy learned that day,—no place in the affections of his sole surviving parent.

His father being seated, addressed him :

"Achille, you are now of an age to enter the university, for admission to which the nature and ex-

tent of your studies eminently qualify you. In a few days the annual examination of candidates will take place, and in the interval you can select and arrange a library for your room, and collect what other conveniences you may require. You will leave in the first packet that passes down the river."

This was a delightful announcement to the subject of it, and not wholly unexpected. To the university, that world in miniature, he had long looked forward with pleasurable anticipations. It was a field of action, at least, and he panted to enter upon it.

The two brothers had both prepared for admission into the same class, and he inquired if Henri was to accompany him.

"He is not," replied the father, coldly and firmly.

"He is certainly prepared, sir!"

"Undoubtedly! But I have decided that he is to be my companion to Europe this season, as I fear his delicate constitution will not admit of his confining himself at present to sedentary pursuits."

"I was anticipating that happiness for myself," replied Achille, chagrined at his father's preference for his brother, so unexpectedly manifested, not only by the words he uttered but by his tone and manner. He had long known his intention to visit his native land, and expected to accompany him, although his expectations were founded rather on his own wishes than any encouragement he had received from his parent.

Now that he learned his intention of taking Henri, instead of himself, he felt keenly the preference; and the coldness, if not severity, of manner he assumed in communicating his determination, offended his pride, whilst his decided partiality for his brother wounded his self-love. The old soldier was a man of few words, and his son was well aware, that, his resolution once formed, he was un-

bending. He knew that his brother was to go, and and that he was to remain ; and with a bitter and wounded spirit he turned his darkening brow from the penetrating gaze of his father, and looked forth upon the beautiful scene which lay out-spread beneath the windows of the library.

A closing door roused him from his gloomy and sinful reverie, and turning, he found himself once more alone ! No—not quite alone ! An evil spirit—Jealousy ! pregnant with dark thoughts and evil imaginings was his companion. A long hour passed away, during which, his first fierce conflict with his hitherto slumbering passions took place. The first suspicion that his brother was best loved, then entered his thoughts. Once admitted, it undermined, by its subtle logic, the better feelings of his heart. Doubts were strengthened to confirmations, suspicions magnified to certainties, in the rapid and prejudiced retrospect he took of his father's bearing towards his brother and himself, from the earliest period of his recollection.

But an hour—one short, but momentous hour,—for then was fixed the lever which moved the world of passions within him, with all their evil consequences, had expired, and the canker-worm of hatred with its venomous fangs, was gnawing at the last slender fibre that bound him to his brother, when the hall door was thrown open and the unsuspecting and innocent subject of his dark meditations bounded into the room, holding in his extended hand a gemmed locket.

“ See brother, see ! ” he exclaimed, in a loud and delighted tone, “ see what my dear father has presented me as a birth-day's gift ! ”

Achille raised his eyes and fixed them upon the sparkling locket which enclosed the miniature of an exceedingly beautiful female, with a form, cheek, and eye, radiant with feminine loveliness.

He recognized the portrait of their mother, which till that moment had ever been worn, as the holy pilgrim wears the sacred cross, next to the heart of his father. So dearly treasured had that sacred memento of his departed wife ever been, that he never was permitted to remove it from the mourning ribbon by which it was dependant from his neck. Now, he saw the cherished relic in the possession of his brother, a gift from him. His lip curled, and his dark eye became darker still at this stronger confirmation of his father's partiality, yet he neither spoke nor betrayed his feelings by any visible emotion ; but the fires within his breast raged deeper still. Like pent up flames, his passions gained vigour by the very efforts made to smother them.

For the first time in his life he looked upon Henri coldly, and without a smile of tenderness. He felt indeed, although his lips moved not with the biting words that rose to them, that the poison of his heart must have been communicated to his eyes, for, as his brother caught their unwonted expression, he suddenly checked himself, and the gay tones of his voice sunk subdued to a strange whisper, as he faintly inquired, at the same time placing his delicate hand upon his shoulder, " if he were ill ?"

" *No !*" he replied, with an involuntary sternness that startled even himself.

The next moment he would have given worlds to recall that fatal monosyllable, and pronounce it over again, more gently ; but it was too late. The sensitive boy recoiled as though he had encountered the eye of a basilisk ; his forehead changed to a deadly hue, the blood fled from his cheeks, and he seemed about to sink upon the floor ; but, suddenly recovering himself, he laughed, and the rich blood came back again, and his eye glanced brightly as he exclaimed, but half-assured,

“ Brother, you did but try to frighten me—you were not in earnest angry with me ?”

His heart melted for a moment at this affectionate appeal, but with a strange perverseness he steeled it to insensibility.

“ Leave me to myself,” he roughly replied, “ I am not in the humour to be trifled with.”

Mysterious inconsistency of will and action ! He would have given his right hand or plucked out his right eye, to have recalled the first angry word he uttered. In his own mind he did not will to speak thus harshly ; yet, by a singular yet frequent anomaly, his words and manner were directly in opposition to his will. The first word spoken in an angry mood, hewed out a broad pathway for legions.

As he uttered his last words, the tears gushed into Henri's eyes, and yielding to the influence of affection, he sprung forward and threw himself into his elder and beloved brother's arms, wept aloud, and sobbed out amidst his tears,

“ Brother ! Achille ! wherein has Henri offended you ?”

An evil spirit now seemed indeed to have taken possession of him. With angry violence he thrust Henri from his embrace, while a curse sprung to his lips. The poor youth tottered and reeled fell forward, striking his forehead as he fell, violently against a marble pedestal upon which stood an alabaster statue of the Madonna, and the warm blood spouted from his gashed temples over the cold, white robes of the image.

It was a spectacle of horror ! and the guilty being gazed wildly upon his prostrate brother, and thought of Abel and his murderer—upon the red-sprinkled image, and laughed, “ Ha ! ha ! ha !” as maniacs laugh, at the fitness of his first offering—a mangled brother—at the shrine of the virgin mother.

The momentary but terrific spell upon his reason passed away ; and throwing himself upon the senseless boy, he attempted to stop the ebbing current of life as it trickled in a small red stream down his pale forehead, steeping his auburn curls in gore, at the same time, calling loudly and madly for assistance.

His father followed by the servants rushed into the library.

“ Help sir, my brother is dying !” he cried wildly.

The old man sprang forward and caught his bleeding child in his arms. His practised eye at once comprehended the extent of the injury he had sustained. He had received a deep cut in the shape of a crescent over the left eyebrow, yet not severe enough to endanger life. The free flow of the blood soon restored him to his senses, and opening his eyes, as his father with a tender hand staunched the bubbling blood, he fixed them upon his brother with an expression that eloquently spoke forgiveness.

“ God pity me !” exclaimed the repentant and now broken-spirited boy ; for that look went to his heart ; and burying his face in his hands, he precipitately left the room.

The long and bitter hours of grief, remorse and shame, he suffered in the solitude of his own room, no tongue, but his who has felt like him, can utter. He experienced sentiments of hatred for himself, a loathing and detestation that tempted him to put a period at once to his own existence. When he recalled the reproving yet forgiving look of his suffering and magnanimous brother, he felt degraded in his own eyes, fallen, lowly fallen in his own self-esteem. That he must be in his brother's he was painfully aware, and for the first time he felt that the gentle-natured Henri was his superior.

CHAPTER III.

“Place the lever of Archimedes in the hands of love, and he will find the point on which to rest it. Perhaps love has caused more evil than ambition. Let us search from the cot of the humblest villager to the tent of Mark Antony, and we shall find it has been the pivot upon which some of the most affecting domestic, and many of the greatest historical, events have turned. Doubtless, that love which is elicited at the first sight of the object, is the most legitimate, the purest, and the most enduring.”—ANONYMOUS.

A STUDENT—THE RETURN—GERTRUDE LANGUEVILLE—LOVE.

DAY closed in night, and night opened into morning, for many long and tedious weeks, and still the old soldier sat by the bed-side of his wounded child.

The generous boy, too honourable to prevaricate, yet too forgiving and fond of his brother to expose all the truth, had told him that he had *fallen* against the pedestal, but not that Achille had *thrust* him against it.

Their father never knew the agency of Achille in the accident; yet, bearing testimony to the truth of the maxim, that suspicion is the handmaiden of guilt, Achille suspected that he was informed of all the circumstances connected with the act. This suspicion, giving its own tinge to the medium through which he viewed and commented upon his father's deportment towards him after the accident, led him to conclusions as unjust as they were unmerited by

his parent. Acting from these conclusions he shunned his society, and never entered his presence but with a sullen air of defiance.

Occasionally he visited the chamber of his brother, when, in answer to his frequent inquiries of the nurse, he learned that he slept; and pressing the fevered hand, or kissing the cheek of the sleeping sufferer, he would watch over him with the tenderness of a mother till the restless motions of the invalid, indicating the termination of his slumbers, or the heavy footsteps of his father ascending the stairway in the hall, warned him to return to the seclusion of his own room, or the deeper solitudes of the forests.

A few months passed away, during which Achille became a student within the walls of a university not far from his paternal home; while his brother, entirely recovered, accompanied his parent on his transatlantic voyage.

The period of Achille's residence at the university afforded no incidents which exerted any influence over his subsequent years. It glided away pleasantly and rapidly. He was known by the professors as one, who, never in his study, or a consumer of midnight oil, yet always prepared for the recitation room; and by his fellows, as a young man of violent passions, honourable feelings, chivalrous in points of honour, a warm friend and magnanimous enemy. Often violent and headstrong in his actions, he was just and equitable in his intercourse with those around him. With a love for hilarity and Tuscan pleasures, he never descended to mingle in the low debauches and nightly sallies, which, from time immemorial have characterized the varieties of college life.

At the early age of nineteen, he received its honours, and bidding adieu to the classic walls within which he had passed so many happy hours—the

happiest of his life—he proceeded to an adjacent port where he expected his father to disembark, on his return from his long residence abroad.

The little green coasting packet—in that early day, when steam navigation had not superseded those teachers of patience to domestic voyagers, the sloop and schooner—had passed up the river the previous evening. He crossed to the opposite shore, in a broad flat wherry, whose representative, in the shape of a neatly painted horse-boat, propelled by the Ixion-like labour of a blind Rosinante, may still be seen plying frequently between the opposite shores.

The sun had just set in a sea of gold and crimson, and a rich mellow light hung like a veil of transparent gauze over land and water, when, after winding round one of the graceful bends of the romantic Kennebec, and ascending an abrupt and rocky eminence, up which the road wound, the beautiful and wooded glen, with the turretted chimnies of his paternal roof appeared, lifting themselves above the oaks, in the midst of which it stood. Reining in his horse upon the brow of the hill, he gazed down upon the lovely scene, with its sweeping river, relieved by a little vessel at anchor upon its black glassy flood—its surrounding hills, its venerable oaks, and serpentine walks—with a thoughtful eye.

Gradually as he gazed, the scene before him faded into indistinctness, in the approaching twilight, and the young moon had launched her silver barque upon the western sky—a timid sailor, venturing each night, farther and farther up into the heavens, and spreading her shining sail broader and broader as she gains confidence from temerity—before the young horseman shook off the spell which had rendered him indifferent to external objects—a spell, whose workings, to judge from the

knitted brow, compressed lips, and pale cheeks, were of no pleasant nature. We will not attempt to analyze his thoughts,—he dared not do it himself—nor will we. Spurring his restless horse down the precipice before him, as he perceived the shades of night thickly gathering, he soon gained the winding avenue leading to his paternal dwelling.

Nearly four years had elapsed, and its halls had echoed to the fall of no familiar footstep. During that period, he had never visited it but once, when scenes and events he would fain forget, were too vividly revived, and he shunned a second time to recall such unwelcome associations.

Now, as he rode forward the retrospection of the past was clouded by a reminiscence that weighed depressingly upon his spirits. Entering the bridle-path which led to the dwelling, he slackened his rein and moved slowly onward, musing upon the approaching interview with his long absent parent and brother, when the sudden glare of a light flashed from one of the windows of the library full upon his face, and roused him from his meditations.

Dismounting at the spacious gateway, he traversed the broad gravelled walk to the house, with a rapid step, anxious to hasten the meeting, which his heart foreboded, would be tinged with both pleasure and pain. He had placed his foot upon the first step, to ascend to the portico, when the apparition of a graceful female figure, gliding past the brightly-illuminated window, stayed his ascent, while emotions of surprise and curiosity usurped for the moment every other feeling.

“Who can she be?” was his mental interrogation as her retreating figure disappeared. But he had no time for conjectures, for the old grey-headed gardener Phillipe, who had followed his

exiled master, through all his fortunes, recognized him as he was taking his evening round about the grounds, and by a loud exclamation of joy, intimated his arrival to the whole household. The next moment he stood in the presence of his father and brother !

We will briefly pass over the interview between them. By the former, his reception was dignified and condescending ; yet there was absence of affection in his manner as he received his congratulations, imperceptible to an ordinary observer, but to which the lively feelings of the young man, were keenly sensitive—a cold politeness in his look and tone, such as a father should not wear to greet a long absent son. And such was the proud spirit of Achille, that he assumed a bearing of *hauteur* and distant respect, which measured his parent's coldness.

Henri, whose slight form and girlish beauty were lost in a manlier elegance of person, met him as brother should meet brother—frankly, affectionately, and ardently. Achille returned his embrace as cordially and sincerely as it was bestowed ; but a cold chill curdled the blood in his veins, as unfolding him from his arms, the purple scar glaring, half-hid by his flowing hair, upon his beautiful forehead, caught his eye.

Days and weeks glided by, and Achille loved !

M. Langueville, a distinguished Frenchman, his maternal uncle, and the only brother of his mother, had married an American lady of eminent beauty, and princely fortune. They both died within a short period of each other, leaving an only daughter, appointing his father the guardian both of her person and inheritance. To receive this trust, was the object of his visit to Europe ; and on his return, his ward accompanied him to make her uncle's mansion her future home.

The lovely vision of the library was this cousin. Gertrude Langueville, at the period of our tale, was a noble creature, with a form of faultless symmetry, voluptuously rounded, and just developing into woman-hood—a rich bud bursting into a full-blown rose.

Neither too tall, nor too short, her figure was of that indefinite size, which a graceful poet has termed “beautifully less.” In her manner she combined the dignity of a woman with the naturalness and infantile grace of a wayward child. The infinite delicacy of her chiselled features, and the finely turned contour of her expressive head, were unsurpassed.

Just turned sixteen, she knew the power to charm, while she seemed not to use it, as, with the bewitching grace of a girl and the refinement of a woman, she enchained the admiration of those around her, while they bent forward to listen to the rich, harp-like tones of her voice in conversation. Her eyes were of the mildest blue of heaven—the indices of a pure and faultless mind. They spoke of a spirit mild and gentle; yet her lofty forehead told that also a spirit proud and high, slumbered within their gentle radiance. Intellectual, she was both romantic and imaginative. Few of her sex were gifted with a mind of higher order, or more accurately cultivated.

Obedient to the waywardness and contrarities of her character, she was at one moment a Hebe, charming by her grace and vivacity, heightened by the sparkling expression of her eloquent eyes and beaming face, upon which every thought brilliantly played, like the reflection of sunny landscapes upon a shadowed lake, mantling it with a richer beauty—or, now a Minerva, commanding admiration and esteem by her originality of thought, and the lofty character of her mind.

Achille admired—loved—worshipped her !

We will not linger over the recital of his first meeting with this charming girl, and the wild impassioned progress of his love. With the impetuosity of a mountain torrent, it merged every passion in itself, absorbing all the faculties of his soul.

His love was unrequited.

CHAPTER IV.

"Your true lover is a monopolizer. He must himself receive all favours and do all favours. He can bear no participator. He will sooner forgive acts of indignity against himself, than the man who steps between him and his mistress' danger. If he cannot aid her himself, he would rather lose her than that another should boast of the honour. If I wished to make him my enemy, I would save his mistress' life."

BROWN.

A MORNING EXCURSION—SCENE ON THE ICE—AN ESCAPE—
LOVE AND JEALOUSY.

SPRING was just opening in that enlivening and rapid manner peculiar to northern latitudes, when Achille and his brother accompanied their cousin on a morning excursion along the beautiful shores of the river. The earth was clothed with the mantle of green and grey, which young spring loves to throw around her, and the morning was bright and warm for the season, as if June had usurped the wand of rude and blustering March.

They had reined in their horses on the verge of a lofty cliff overhanging the river, and remained gazing upon its icy surface, which, as far as the eye could reach, north and south, presented one vast plain of chrysal. The lateness of the season rendered it imprudent to venture upon it, although, except in its soft, white appearance, under the warm sun, it presented no indication of weakness. Gertrude, excited by the gay canter along the cliff, and

in unusually high spirits, proposed galloping across the river, which, during the winter they had frequently done, and ascend a hill on the opposite side, from whose summit there was an extensive prospect she had repeatedly admired.

"By no means, Gertrude," exclaimed Achille, "it would be rashness to attempt it."

"I think not, cousin," she replied, with that love of opposition which is the prescriptive right of the sex. "It is evidently very firm; only three days ago, I saw several horsemen passing down the river at a hand gallop."

"But you forget the warmth of the sun, Gertrude!"

"Not enough to affect this solid mass before us," she replied, "at all events, I can but try it."

So, slightly shaking her bridle, she cantered down the smooth road to the foot of the cliff, rapidly followed by the brothers.

"Do not venture upon the ice, cousin Gertrude, I beseech," mildly remonstrated Achille, when they gained the beach, "you will certainly endanger your life!"

"How very pathetic and careful, cousin of mine," she replied, with a playful, yet half-vexing air; "if you really think there is so much danger, we will excuse your attendance. I am fearless as to the result, and quite confident that the ice will bear Léon and me. See, now," added she, as her beautiful jennet bounded forward on hearing his name, "'Léon is more obedient to fayre ladies' commands than their sworn esquires;'" and her fine eyes glanced mischievously as she spoke.

This badinage touched Achille, who was sensitively alive to ridicule, especially from the lips of the lady of his love. Biting his lip to suppress his feelings, he calmly observed, "I regard not myself, Gertrude, it is for you I speak. If you are resolved

to go, I shall certainly accompany you, although the greater the weight, the more imminent will be the danger."

"So will Henri, will you not, Henri?" she said, half-assuredly, half-inquiringly; and a sweet smile, such as maidens love to bestow on their favoured swains, dwelt, while she spoke, upon her pretty lips, and mantled her cheeks, with a scarcely perceptible shade of crimson.

Henri, who had remained silent during this brief colloquy, though always close to his cousin's rein, replied,

"Certainly, Gertrude, although I think with brother, that there is a spice of temerity in the attempt. Allow me to dis—"

"*Allons* then," she gaily cried, placing her gloved finger upon her cousin's mouth, and exciting the spirited animal upon which she was mounted to spring forward on to the crumbling verge of the ice.

Achille buried his spurs in the sides of his horse, and, in one bound, was the next moment at the head of her palfrey and dismounted—with the rein in his grasp.

"For God's sake, Gertrude, stop! you must not venture so rashly," he cried, with energy, "do not go, I beg of you!"

"Loose my rein, Achille, and don't be so earnest about a mere trifle," she said, hastily.

"Nay, cousin," said Achille, in a softer tone, "the life of Gertrude can be—"

"Now don't be sentimental, cousin Achille;" she laughingly interrupted, "do be just good enough to free Léon's head. See how impatient he is."

"Do, cousin, allow me to plead!"

"No, no, you know how I hate pleading;" and, without replying further, she dexterously extricated her bridle from his grasp, touched her impatient

horse smartly with the whip, and gaily crying, "*Sauve qui peut*," sprung forward like an arrow.

"Achille! your horse!" exclaimed Henri. "Mad girl, she is lost!" he added, and spurring after her, was in an instant galloping by her side. Achille turned on the instant to vault into his saddle, and beheld his horse, which he had left unsecured on dismounting, coursing, with his mane flowing, and the stirrups wildly flying, at full speed on his way homeward.

"Holy devil!" ejaculated he, through his clenched teeth, at the same time uttering a malediction upon the flying animal; then turning to look after the rash girl, he scarcely forbore repeating it, as he saw her with his brother at her side, cantering over the brittle and transparent surface of the river.

They were more than half-way to the opposite shore, when a loud report, deadened like the subterranean discharge of cannon, or the first rumbling of an earthquake, struck his ears, accompanied by a white streak, flashing, like lightning, along the surface of the ice, from shore to shore.

"God of heaven!" he exclaimed, uttering a cry of horror, as he saw the vast field of ice shivered along its whole extent. With a loud voice he shouted for them to return for their lives. Yet they heard him not, although now evidently aware of their danger; for they increased the speed of their horses, and made for the opposite shore, to which they were nearest, as the only chance for safety.

Suddenly, sharp reports, in rapid succession, like the near explosion of musketry, reverberated along the ice, which began to swell and heave like the surface of the ocean in a calm. Save the agitation on the river, all else was still. The skies wore the pure blue of spring, the winds were hushed, the air was close and sultry, and a deep silence, like that of night, reigned over nature.

A wild cry of terror suddenly reached his ears,—fearfully breaking the stillness of the morning. His heart echoed the cry, but his arm could bring no aid. The adventurers had diminished their furious speed, and were hovering on the verge of a yawning chasm, which had suddenly opened before them. To advance was destruction; to retrace their way equally threatening. There was a moment's hesitancy, Achille observed from the summit of a pyramid of ice, which had been thrown upon the beach, and then he saw them turn their horses' heads, and, with a rapid flight, seek, over the moving, unsteady surface of the heaving flood, the shore they had left.

Onward they flew, like the wind. The labouring ice shivered and groaned in their rear, heaving itself in huge masses of wild and fantastic shapes into the air behind them. Near the shore towards which they were now directing their fearful course, the ice had yet remained firm. But, as they advanced, it groaned, heaved, and rose in vast piles in their path, while a yawning chasm gaped wide before them. Loudly and despairingly Achille shouted, as he indicated with his riding-whip, the surer way of escape from this chasm, which was momentarily enlarging; otherwise he could render them no assistance.

They saw their danger, but too late. Their impetus was too powerful to be resisted by the slight fingers of the maiden, as she drew in her reins with painful and terrified exertion, and her horse dashed in among the broken and heaving masses of ice, as they were agitated by the swelling current, and hurled, crashing and grinding with a loud noise, against each other. A wild cry pierced the ears of the paralyzed Achille, and horse and rider disappeared beneath the terrific surface.

Henri, who with a stronger arm had reined in his fiery animal, no sooner witnessed the fearful plunge, than, springing from his horse, he flew to the verge from which she had leaped, and for an instant gazed down into the cold, black flood, which had closed like a pall over the lovely girl. The next moment the deep waters received his descending form into their bosom!

A moment of intense suffering, during which Achille's heart distended almost to bursting, passed, and the waters were agitated, and the head of her favourite Léon came to the surface. The affrighted animal glaring around, his dilated eyes intelligent with almost human expression, uttered a loud and terrific scream, and pawing with his fore-feet upon the cakes of ice floating near him, made several violent and ineffectual attempts, with the exercise of extraordinary muscular exertion, to draw himself up on to them; while the big veins swelled and started out in bold relief from his glossy hide, his nostrils expanded and gushed forth blood upon the white ice, and audible groans came from his bursting chest.

In vain were the tremendous and sublime efforts of the noble animal—his strength gradually failed, and he could at last retain his hold only with one hoof upon the crumbling verge: that at last fell into the water. The dying steed gave an appalling cry, which the other horse, who stood gazing on him with a look of sympathy, repeated, and the shores caught up and re-echoed from cliff to cliff, till it died away in the distance, like the wailing notes of suffering fiends. Then, rolling his large eyes round in terror and despair, he sunk from the sight of the horror-stricken Achille.

"She is lost, lost!" he exclaimed, mentally

imprecating his situation, which rendered it impossible for him to assist her.

Vast cakes of ice, between the elevation upon which he stood and the place where they had disappeared, constantly rolled by, tossed and whirled, like egg shells, tumultuously upon the fierce torrent. Conscious of his total inability to afford the least aid, he stood gazing like a rivetted statue upon the dark sepulchre which had entombed the only being he loved.

"Merciful providence, I thank thee!" he exclaimed, dropping impulsively upon one knee, with clasped and uplifted hands, as he saw appear above the water, far below the spot where Léon sunk, one after another, the heads of his cousin and brother. She was lifeless in his arms, her luxuriant tresses floating upon the waves, her beautiful head pillowed upon his shoulder!

With a cry of joy he sprang forward to the point towards which he was swimming among the floating ice with his lovely burden. Henri was a bold and experienced swimmer. In boyhood it was the only amusement in which he delighted or fearlessly engaged. Achille stood upon the utmost verge of the ice, and cast his riding cloak out upon the water, retaining the tassel that he might draw them, now almost exhausted, to the shore.

"No, brother," said Henri faintly, yet firmly. And a triumphant smile lighted his pale cheek as he declined the proffered aid. In a moment afterwards he laid the fair girl upon the bank—*the preserver of her life!*

Achille cursed in his heart the fortune that had blessed his brother. When as he swam with her, he saw her marble cheek reposing against his, his arm encircling her waist,

"Would to God," he muttered, in the dark chambers of his bosom, "that she had made the cold

waters her tomb than be saved thus ! But no, no, too blessed a death for that proud boy to die. His death shall be less sacred."

His lip curled bitterly as he spoke, and his blood fired with the dark thoughts his new-born hatred and revenge called up. The passions which had slumbered for years were once more roused within him, hydra-headed and terrible.

Like a superior being, his brother gently laid the breathless form of his cousin upon the bank. Achille gazed upon them both for an instant in silence, and while he gazed, felt his bosom torn with conflicting emotions of love and hatred.

As he bent over the lifeless girl, chafing her slender fingers and snowy arm, he half breathed the wish that she might not return to consciousness to be told that Henri was her preserver. He looked upon his brother as he assisted him in restoring her to animation, and felt that hatred, malice, and revenge burned in the concentrated expression of his glowing dark eyes ; but as he encountered the proud glance of his brother, and witnessed the calm dignity of his demeanor, he withdrew his gaze from his face, but hated him the more.

But a few minutes elapsed after she had been laid upon the bank, when, accompanied by the old gardener and one or two of the servants, their father advanced rapidly towards them, having been alarmed by the appearance of Achille's horse flying riderless to the stables.

The breathless old man, instinctively comprehending the whole scene, kneeled by the side of his beloved niece, and by their united efforts she was soon resuscitated. Then, for the first time, he looked up, and observing the dripping garments of Henri, he smiled upon him with that comprehensive and affectionate smile, he wore when he looked upon those he loved. But as he turned upon Achille, there was

no glance of affection, no smile of approval—his eye was cold, severe and passionless.

Gertrude at length unclosed her eyes, gazed intelligently upon those around her, and then resting them for an instant upon the saturated dress of her cousin, slowly dropped the lids again to shade them from the light, while her lips, gently parted, and almost inaudibly pronounced,

“ Henri !”

Achille sprung as though a serpent had stung him, and a fearful imprecation thrilled upon his tongue. His father frowned menacingly, while a smile, just such a one as passed over his face when he rejected the proffered cloak, and which, from its proud and happy, if not exulting expression, entered his bosom like a poisoned barb, re-opening the wound years had not healed, lighted up his brother's features, and the glance accompanying the smile was a glance of conscious victory.

CHAPTER V.

"As is the lion in the hunter's toils, thou art caged in. Thy doom is settled; ay, as sealed as if the genius of your star had writ it."

"I am prepared."

"'Tis well. The hour is fitting for a traitor's death."

DUGALD MOORE.

"The first crime is the Rubicon of guilt already crossed. Man, like that beast of prey which tasting human blood will touch no other, if perchance he stain his finger in his fellows' blood, is not content till he wash both hands in it. The first crime, give it leisure and convenience, will have its second."

A DECLARATION—SOLILOQUY—A MEETING BETWEEN THE
BROTHERS—ITS TERMINATION—A FLIGHT.

BUT a few days had expired since the events just related, and the fields of ice had been swept to the ocean. The beautiful river flowed onward silently and majestically, gently meandering along the verge of green meadows, or darting swiftly with noise and foam around projecting rocks—its pellucid bosom dotted with white sails, its sloping hills bursting into green luxuriance, and its overhanging forests enveloping themselves in their verdant robes.

Achille had passed the day ostensibly in hunting, but really to prey undisturbed, in the deep-wooded solitude of the cliffs, upon his diseased spirit.

The approach of night found him leaning on his hunting piece, his empty game-bag lying at his feet, standing upon the summit of a cliff which overhung the river. The sun had just gone down beyond the hills of Monmouth in his own created sea of sapphire, the western star hung tremb-

lingly in the heavens, while the crescent moon, half unveiling her chaste face, shed a holy light down upon the earth, mingling her pale rays with the golden hues of twilight.

The scene of his cousin's rash adventure and his brother's triumph lay beneath him. A calm and hallowed silence, broken only by the gurgling of the waters as they swept by among the loose rocks at the base of the cliff, or the sighing of the trees as they waved heavily to the low, night wind, reigned around him. The wildest spirit becomes gentler under the soothing influence of such a time! But the bosom of the young man was insensible to every external impression. With a troubled brow and trembling lip, while he crushed a starting tear beneath his eyelids, he communed with his own wounded spirit.

"Virgin mother! have I not loved her! loved her as man seldom loves! Loved her did I say?—was she not the object of my thoughts by day—the bright spirit of my dreams! Did I not adore, (forgive me, Mary mother!) worship her next to thee? Was not her image enshrined within the inner and most hallowed temple of my soul? Oh God, oh God!" and he leaned his head upon his gun, and the big tears coursed down his manly cheek.

The momentary weakness—if sorrow for shattered hopes, and crushed aspirations be weakness—soon passed away, and he stood up with a firm and collected manner. His brow gradually became set, his eye glowed, and a withering expression of rage, curled and agitated his lip, while he continued in a changed voice—

"Burning, burning truth! my thoughts will consume me! I would not have profaned her hand by a careless touch—yet I have beheld her in my brother's arms!" With fearful calmness he uttered these last words and in the same tone, added,

“The cheek by me held sacred—its profanation sacrilege! I have seen laid upon his bosom. Nay! I *will* think of it—turn each minute circumstance over and round that I may survey it well—for it feeds a passion I must let live, or die myself! Yes, that cheek, that rich, delicate cheek, with the hue of a rosy cloud, have I seen reposing upon my brother’s—imbibing from it life and warmth! I have beheld her tresses mingled with his, her sylph-like waist encircled in his embrace, and knew that their throbbing hearts beat together, as in one bosom, beneath the wave. And I remained silent!—calm!—for myself—calm. Calm! I burned,—my glowing bosom was in flames—yet—”

His dark meditations were interrupted by the hum of low voices, ascending from the beach at the foot of the cliff upon which he stood. Leaning over the precipice he looked down, but the deep shadows at the base obscured every object. Yet he listened with every sense dilated and resolved into one single one, as the wily Indian watches for the light footfall of his foe; his expanded ear alone the organ of communication with external objects.

A low melodious voice rose upon the still air like music. It fell upon the heart of the listener, not as melody falls upon the soul, soothingly, but with the unholy influence of a spell, withering it to its core.

“Nay, Henri, I love him not, I fear his wild and ungovernable spirit—I *fear*, but I *love* him *not*!”

“But now, you said, dear Gertrude, that you could not refuse your admiration for what you have termed my fiery brother’s noble nature and chivalrous spirit. Are not these the qualities that win a maiden’s heart?”

“How little you are skilled, my dear Henri, in that riddle,—a woman’s heart! Such qualities may allure, but never win. Achille can, and will command,

but never win, esteem. He may elicit *admiration*, but never *love* !”

This was the language of the being Achille so madly worshipped. And did he listen to the silvery tones of her voice, thus crushing forever all his hopes, in silence ? Yes, such silence as precedes the earthquake before it bursts. The voices had died away, but they still rung with fearful echoes through his bosom. In a few moments, whilst he stood transfixed, overwhelmed by a wave of passions, a winding in their path, brought the voices of his brother and cousin again within reach of his ear, and as they walked slowly along, he saw the white garments of Gertrude glancing through the branches of the intervening trees.

“Then, then it shall be yours, if the gift be worth accepting !” he heard, in a scarcely audible voice.

“Rich—lovely treasure !” warmly exclaimed the happy and favoured youth, seizing the graceful hand she had ingenuously given him, and pressing it passionately to his lips.

“Hell and devils !” muttered Achille through his set teeth, and striking his forehead with his clenched hand.

He had stood till now, with suppressed breath, a burning eye and expanded ear, like a statue of stone. But he could endure no more ; and scarcely suppressing a fierce cry, he sprung, leaping and bounding like a mad-man, down the face of the precipitous rock, in a direction opposite to that taken by the lovers, and in a moment stood upon the beach.

Hour after hour he paced the hard white terrace of sand, and strove to calm the raging tempest in his bosom. He bared his head to the cool night-breeze—bathed his heated brow in the clear flood at his feet. He gazed upon the placid moon and wooed its soothing influence—upon the solemn forests and peacefully

flowing river ; but the low voice of nature spoke to his warring spirit in vain. Hour after hour passed away, and he had given himself up to the guidance of the dark spirit he could not control, and had purposed revenge.

"The exulting boy shall feel what it is to cross my path. He shall die ! by heaven, he shall die !" he whispered, through his compressed lips. At the same instant a loud voice from the cliff rung in his ear.

"Achille ! Achille ! are you there ?" It was his brother. Ascending the cliff with rapidity, the next moment Achille was at his side.

"No, brother," he sarcastically replied, with his mouth close to his ear, "I am not there, but *here* !" and as he spoke his voice sounded hoarse and unearthly.

Henri started ; but observed, without further noticing his brother's singular manner, that his father having apprehensions for his safety, from his remaining so long abroad, had requested him to seek him.

"Have you met with any game, brother ?" he enquired.

"Yes brother, a sweet dove and a cunning hawk."

"Did you secure the birds ?"

"Aye, the hawk, but the dove,—the dove, although it wounded me with its angry bill, I could not stain its snow-white plumage with red blood. But the subtler bird I have meshed."

"Brother, your language and manner is strange and unwonted, and your face by this faint light looks pale and haggard. Have you met with aught to embitter your spirit during the day ?"

They now, having walked slowly forward while speaking, stood upon the spot where Henri and Gertrude plighted their loves in the sight of Achille. He made no reply to his brother's inquiry, but stop-

ping suddenly, seized him with energy by the arm, and gazed fixedly and revengefully upon his face.

"What mean you, brother? unhand me Achille!" exclaimed Henri, alarmed.

The fires within, smothered for a brief space, now raged tumultuously and fierce, breaking out like a volcano, long pent up in the bosom of the earth.

"Know you where you stand?" he loudly and angrily demanded.

"Release me, brother—what is your mad purpose?"

"Aye, *mad!*" he reiterated. "Yes, I *am* mad. Know you where you stand?" he repeated, in a harsh voice, while his eyes glowed visibly even in the darkness of the deep shadows in which they stood.

"God of heaven!" he shouted fiercely on receiving no reply. "Speak, craven, or *thus*, I'll crush you!" and with his iron fingers he pressed the throat of his victim.

"Unhand me, brother!" cried Henri, till now unresisting in the grasp of one, from whom he apprehended no real injury, and whose violent rage he supposed would soon subside. But he knew not the irresistible power of the stream which he himself, perhaps unconsciously, had contributed to swell. He had not traced it from the fountain through all its devious and subterranean windings, fed by a thousand hidden springs, until it approached the precipice over which it was about to thunder a terrible and mighty cataract.

"Do me no harm, Achille, I am your *brother!*" he exclaimed, and with a strong effort freed his throat from his grasp.

"So was Abel his brother's brother, and so—" and his lip withered with scorn and hatred as he spoke:—"and so is Henri MINE! but revenge—I love dearer still. Henri, I hate you? Know you this accursed spot, I again repeat?"

Henri now released from his violent hold stood proudly up, and baring his pale brow to the moonlight, which fell down upon it through an opening in the foliage like the visible presence of a blessing, answered,

"I do, sir; it is consecrated ground; and I learn from your strange language and manner, that you have witnessed the sacred ceremony which hallowed it!"

He spoke calmly, and in a tone of dignity, while a proud, if not sarcastic smile played faintly over his lips. Achille already insane with passion, fiercely shouted,

"And it shall be doubly consecrated by a sacrifice of blood! Proud fool, your mockery has sealed your fate. I needed only *this*," and springing fiercely upon him, he seized him by the breast with one hand, and, glancing in the moon while he brandished it in the air, his glittering hunting-knife descended like lightning into the bosom of his victim. The warm blood spouted into the face of the fratricide, and bathed his hand in gore.

"Oh, Gertrude—my father—God—brother! I for—forgive," he faintly articulated, and with a groan that sunk to the heart of the murderer, fell heavily to the ground.

For a few moments the guilty being stood over the prostrate body, with his arm outstretched in the position in which he had given the fatal blow, his features rigid his eyes glazed, and his whole person as motionless as marble—the statue of a murderer chiselled to the life! During that brief moment he endured an eternity of suffering. The torments of ages were expressed into one single drop of time!

Who may tell the feelings of the impulsive murderer as he sees the life-blood gush out—the features pale and stiffen, and the strong man become

at once a cold corpse at his feet, and when conscience asks, who has done this—"I, I, I,"—oh, how bitterly is the confession wrung from his bosom.

But we will not dwell upon this scene. The fratricide fled, beneath the cold moon and glittering stars, which like eyes of intelligence seemed to look down reprovingly upon him. On he fled, nor dared to look up to them; the little light they shed became hateful, and he felt as though he would draw darkness around him like a garment, hiding himself from both God and man.

"Oh that the rocks would fall upon me and hide me ever from myself!" he groaned inwardly; and a loud voice within cried, "Vain, vain! live on! live on forever!" And he buried his face in his cloak and fled still onward.

The morning broke, and the miserable fugitive still pursued the path which led along the shores of the river to the sea. As the light increased, he saw, for the first time, that his dress was sprinkled with his brother's blood. He shuddered, and the fatal scene rushed once more upon his mind in all its horrors. Hastily plunging into the river, (alas! for the tales of blood, of which river and sea are the dumb repositories!) he removed all traces of the deed he had committed, from his person.

Two hours before sunset he came in sight of the bay, its bosom relieved by many green islands and dotted with white sails. He hailed the broad ocean in the distance with a thrill of pleasure.

Hastening to the coast, which was guarded by lofty mural precipices, he swung himself down their sides with that daring wrecklessness which is often the surest means of success, and throwing himself into a small boat which had been left in a cove by some one of the fishermen, whose huts were scattered in picturesque sites along the cliffs of the romantic and rock-bound coast, he raised the little sail, and steered out to sea.

BOOK II.

LOVE AND PIRACY.

He had an only daughter,—
The greatest heiress of the eastern isles ;
Besides so very beautiful was she,
Her dowry was nothing to her smiles :
Still in her teens and like a lovely tree
So grew to womanhood ———

* * * * *

IRAD. I loved her well—I would have loved her better,
Had love been met with love ; as 'tis, I leave her
To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

JAPH. What destinies ?

IRAD. I have some cause to think
She loves another.

* * * * *

But who that chief ? His name on every shore
Is famed and feared ?

BYRON.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

“Smuggling or frauds practised against the revenues originated in certain vices or imperfections in our laws, by which, as they are not yet reformed, this system of piracy is still pursued. Smuggling is at best but a school of piracy ; but wiser legislation might prevent much crime and render the navigation of the high seas more secure.”

LETTERS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

“Circumstances sometimes impel men to crimes against which their nature revolts, yet they are not the less guilty.”—IBID.

SKETCH OF THE BUCCANEERS OF BARRITARIA—SCENE IN JAMAICA—A NIGHT EXPEDITION.

About one-fifth of the brief term of years to which Divine Wisdom has limited the life of man we have suffered to roll unrecorded down the tide of time.

Our tale now opens in a new theatre, with scenes of fresher and more exciting interest, before which characters move and act who have borne no inconsiderable part in the great drama of the second, and last, war of independence, between the United States of the North and Great Britain.

A few years before the commencement of this memorable and decisive war, a daring band of privateers-men, inured to every hardship to be encoun-

tered in storms of battle, or of the elements, and as free as the winds which filled their flowing sheets, had obtained commissions from the new government of Carthagena, then first struggling for independence, to cruise against the royalists, or vessels sailing under the flag of Spain. By the authority of these commissions, they not only made numerous captures on the great highway of nations, but blockaded many ports of the royalists in the Mexican and West India seas.

Giving a latitude to their commissions which the government from which they received them did not recognize or foresee, they embraced in them, besides the ships of the royalists, such other vessels as they might fall in with, which, on trial, proved unable to withstand their superior force. From privateers-men, sailing under the flag of a South American state, emboldened by success and power, they became rovers of the wide blue sea, independent of every flag but their own bright-red banner, and acknowledging no commission but that written upon the edge of their gleaming sabres. The flags of every nation struck to their own, and the broad waters of the Mexican sea became at the same time their empire, their battle-field, and their home.

The prizes, their lawless mode of translating special commissions, and that delusion of the visual organs which led them to see in every flag, the gorgeous blazonry of his Majesty of Spain, against whom they had declared open war, enabled them to seize, were taken into the secret bayous and creeks adjacent to the mouth of the Mississippi, where they were effectually concealed and safe from capture or pursuit.

The most important passes made use of by these buccaneers, and with which the scenes of our tale are more immediately connected, lie about twenty leagues to the west of the delta of the Mississippi,

and about forty miles south-west of the city of New-Orleans. Here, an arm of the Mexican gulf extends four or five leagues inland, terminating in the mouths of several bayous or creeks, which, by many devious and intricate windings, known only to the smugglers, reached to within a few miles of New-Orleans. They were navigable only for boats, which here were accustomed to discharge their unlawful freights taken from captured vessels, from whence, through other and more commercial hands, it obtained a rapid and secret conveyance to the city.

This arm of the gulf is termed the bay of Barritaria, so called, from that system of naval bartrary which characterized the class of men which usually frequented it. The mouth of this bay, or lake, as it is more generally denominated, from being nearly encircled by the land, is defended by a small island about two leagues in length and three miles in breadth, which lies in a direction east and west, and nearly parallel with the line of the coast, leaving two narrow passes or entrances to the lake from the gulf.

That, on the east, at the period with which we are to identify our tale, was exceedingly shallow; allowing only the passage of boats of light draught; the western and main pass only admitted vessels drawing nine and ten feet of water. This island, which is called indiscriminately, Grande Terre and Barritaria, is not an unbroken level, like the surrounding low lands, or prairies, constituting the southern section of Louisiana, but, with a striking geological feature in reference to the aspect of this region, it rises abruptly from the sea, with bold and precipitous sides, sometimes swelling into slight eminences several feet in height, covered with dense forests of trees, among which, superior to all, towers the live-oak in its iron strength. It also abounds in

a great variety of game ; and an abundance of excellently-flavoured fish are taken in its waters. Each extremity of this island, at the time of which we speak, was strongly fortified and bristly with cannon, completely commanding both entrances to the inner bay or lake.

Close within the western and deeper inlet to the right, and effectually concealed by the intervening islands from the open sea, from which it was about three leagues distant, was a safe and commodious anchorage ; the only secure harbour for many leagues along that dangerous coast.

This island, with its anchorage, was the principal resort of the Carthaginian smugglers. From their little territory, which in the face of the government of the North United States, they had boldly usurped, the fame of their extraordinary deeds went abroad over sea and land, till the name of Barrataria was associated in the minds of men, with crimes and deeds of outlawry, unparalleled in the history of banned and out-cast men.

For better security, and more efficient operations, these men, at first sailing singly, each upon his own desperate enterprise, ultimately associated themselves into one body, conferring the command of their squadron on an individual of their number, whose distinguished qualifications as a commander over such a fleet, and such men, manifested on many a bloody deck and many a desperate fight, marked him singularly as their leader.

Besides this rendezvous of the buccaneers of Barrataria, in Louisiana, there were two others of less importance ; one of which was situated in an uninhabited part of the coast, in the neighbourhood of Carthage, and the other in the West India seas, on the west coast of the island of St. Domingo. In these seas, and ultimately in this last-mentioned spot, are laid the scenes of our second book.

In one of the romantic bays, with which the southern shore of the island of Jamaica is indented, and on one of the rich autumn evenings peculiar to the Indian seas, about fifteen years subsequent to the period embraced by the last book, a long, low, black schooner, very taunt and sharp in the bows, with all light sail drawing freely, and a red and blue signal fluttering aloft, might have been seen bowling gallantly over the miniature waves of the bay, which glittered in the sun-light as though overlaid with golden mail.

On the deck of the little vessel, which was heavily armed and full of men, stood one of commanding person, whose features, as he leaned over the quarter-railing, were partially concealed by the drooping front of his broad palmetto hat; that portion of his face, however, which could be discerned, displayed a black silken mustacho, curving like cupid's bow, over a fine mouth, whose general expression was resolution. Now, however, a yellow segar severed his lips, which languidly embraced it, while an occasional cloud of blue smoke emitted from beneath his overshadowing hat, curled above his head, and floating to leeward, blended with the evening haze.

Listlessly, like one familiar with the scenery, he gazed upon the glorious prospect spread out before and around him, rising from the shores of the bay and retreating backward and higher, till the distant clouds bounded the view—a scene of gorgeous sublimity. Precipice on precipice, avalanche on avalanche rose, piled one upon the other—a theatre of magnificent desolation; while the soaring ridges of the Blue Mountains, half mantled in clouds, and the lofty peak of St. Catharine, elevating her summit several thousand feet above the sea, towered proudly above all.

Immediately on his left, rose, to a lesser height, a

chaos of inaccessible cliffs, abrupt rocks, shooting upward like towers and craggy peaks, exhibiting the stern aspect of some great convulsion which had laid nature in ruins. As the schooner shot farther into the bay, these wild features were concealed by intervening wooded hills, which, with round green summits, swelled from the shore ; and as she still lessened her distance from the land, numerous verdurous spots sprinkled along the precipitous side of the mountains, or laid, like green carpets, upon the rocks, and among the trees, softened and relieved the harsher character of the scenery ; while the traces of human ingenuity, taste and labour, were discerned on every hand. Majestic forests, groves of palmetto, and pastures like the softest lawns, now lining the shore and overhanging the water, were rapidly passed ; and vast savannas, covered with variegated cane, as far as the eye could distinguish, displayed, in their changing tints, the verdure of spring, blended with the exuberance of autumn.

As the rover sailed farther into the bay, his eye, as he glanced with momentary animation along the land, rested upon the cots and hamlets of the negroes, the walls of a distant military post, and the white villas of the planters, dispersed picturesquely on the precipices, and in every green nook along the sides of the receding hills. The schooner, after running about a league into the land, suddenly altered her course, and stood for the entrance of a little harbour or recess of the bay ; and now, under her mainsail and jib alone, coasted along a bold shore, dotted here and there with a magnificent pimento—groves of which clothed the distant eminences. The summits of the cliffs, beneath which it sailed, were verdant with trees of thickest foliage, while, from their over-hanging brows, tiny cataracts, like slender threads of silver, leaped down into the

sea, ringing musically as they fell, or struck upon the deck of the vessel, sprinkling a cool shower upon the seamen.

The inlet towards which she was rapidly advancing, was nearly enclosed by a chain of isolated rocks, towering like gigantic pinnacles; and a craggy promontory overhanging the basin, half encircled it on the west. Between the termination of this promontory, and the chain of rocks, was visible a narrow passage, by which craft of small size only could pass, one at the time, into the dark, circular pool, sleeping calm and deep within its rocky sides, which, frowning terrifically over it, cast beneath a black shadow, even whilst the sun hung high in the heavens. Now the shadows were deepened in the approaching twilight, and a mysterious gloom gathered over the spot as the day receded, presenting to the imagination dark caverns and horrid ravines on every side.

Into this secret nook the little vessel rapidly shot, under the guidance of a skilful hand, and running into its farthest extremity, towards the main land, came to anchor under a projecting rock, which, cleft to its base, admitted a footway from the water to the highland plantations in the interior. In a few minutes the white sails disappeared, and the tall, black masts of the vessel relieved against the sky, alone betrayed her presence; for the dark hull itself was invisible in the deep shadow of the cliff. Not a sound was heard from her deck after she entered, save an occasional order given in a suppressed voice, and the rubbing of the cable as the anchor sunk noiselessly into the water. The trees were motionless, and not a breath ruffled the limpid surface of the basin.

"List!" said a low, deep voice, from the stern of the vessel; and the distant wail of a bugle fell,

with a melancholy cadence, upon the ears of the listening seamen.

Again it rose and fell, low and plaintive ; and hardly had the sound died in the air when three sharp blasts were blown in rapid succession.

"That's the signal ! Valasquez is as true as steel to his own avarice !" exclaimed the commander of the schooner, whom we have just introduced to the reader.

"Be ready all ! Ten of you go with me. See to your pistols, and let every other man take a dark lantern and a cutlass, and have two oars slung for a barrow. The rest of you be still as the grave, and on the alert to obey my signals. Three pistols, Ricardo," he continued, addressing one of his officers, "fired in succession will be our signal for a reinforcement, should the old Don be too hard for us. Now ashore, my men, all," he added with rapidity and energy.

Accompanied by a handsome youth, and a deformed slave, and followed by ten of his men, in red woollen caps and shirts, and without jackets, he sprung on to a projecting point of rock, heavily armed, and the next moment stood in the mouth of the cleft or defile, terminating at the top of the cliff.

"Madre de Dios !" exclaimed one, in a suppressed whisper, to his comrade by his side, casting his eyes up the narrow and precipitous pass, which they were slowly ascending, "this must be the upstairs to purgatory."

"Rather, Mister Spaniard," drawled his companion—a tall, light-haired, ungainly seaman—through his generous nasal organ, "rather, it may be another guess sort of a road."

"And what may that be ?" inquired a Spanish sailor, gruffly, who toiled on just before him.

"The road to the good place, I guess, Senyore."

"Gif proof o' dat !" said a lank Frenchman, by trade a frissieur, but who had now taken to cutting men's throats instead of their beards. "Gif proof o' dat, by Gar, Monsieur Yenkee !"

"Why, Mister Parley-voo, you see," articulated the other slowly, in reply, "I can prove it to a demonstration from scriptur, if ye happen to know what that are is. Don't it say, 'strait is the gate and narrow is the way that goes up to heaven ?'" and the scriptural quoter cleared his throat emphatically, and wiped his loose lips upon his red woollen sleeve, with an air of self-complacency.

"Give preacher Sol a quid o' tobacco for that sarмонт," said one ; "blast my eyes if he haint arnt it ;" and a low suppressed laugh was heard from two or three of his comrades.

"Silence there," said their leader, in a low, distinct voice ; and the rest of their way up the defile was effected, only occasionally interrupted by the splash of a loose fragment, which, agitated by their feet, fell into the water, or the whispered execration of some one, as a false step had nearly sent him headlong down upon his companions, and into the dark gulf beneath.

"Now, my brave fellows," said the leader of this night-party, as he stood at the head of the defile, upon the summit of the cliff, whilst his men filed past him, and gathered in a group, beneath the dark shadow of a cluster of palm, cocoa-nut and bamboo-cane trees, which crowned the heights. "Now, my good men, we are on an expedition, which, if successful, and its success depends on your own wills, and sharp cutlasses, will redeem all our past losses, which tempted the crew to mutiny. These wars have made all craft, but those who show their teeth, full timid enough in venturing on our legitimate empire ; but this henceforward shall be no cause of

complaint. I have yielded to your wishes on this occasion, not, you well know, because I feared to withstand them, although it is against my own feelings to rob an old man of his hoarded ingots. The free flag, a flowing sheet, and open sea for me. But be ready. I will lead you on this adventure. Ho, Cudjoe!" he said to his slave, "give the answering signal to Velasquez—clearly and well, now, for your boar's head may pay the forfeiture for bungling;" and the clear, wild and discordant cry of the galena, when alarmed, suddenly broke the stillness of the night, now prolonged and low, now sharp and loud—then suddenly ceased.

"Well done, my Guinea-bird," said his master; "your beldam mother, Cudjoe, must have fed you on guinea-eggs."

"Hark! it is answered;" and a similar cry came from the depths of the wood. In a few moments afterwards it was repeated nearer, and then ceased.

The silence which succeeded, was interrupted by a screech and rustling on the left, in the direction of a patch of coarse grass, terminated by clumps of aloes, torch-thistle, and palmetto, which formed the boundary of the cultivated portion of the estate. Every eye turned instantly in that direction, and every man's hand was laid upon the butt of his pistol.

"Ho! Léon, my fine creature, but you are a welcome pioneer!" exclaimed the chief, as a noble dog, of majestic size, bounded into their midst, and sprung fawningly against his master's breast. "But down, sir, down, you hug like a Greenland bear! What news bring you from my trusty spy?"

The sagacious animal, as if the careless question of his master had been intelligible, looked into the face of the querist, and strove to draw his attention

by raising his fore-paw to his neck and striking once or twice forcibly the broad, studded collar encircling it.

"Ha! it is so? Théodore, open your lantern," said the chief to the youth; "cautiously, though:" and the pirate bent over the collar and examined it, while the dog stood wagging his huge tail with a motion expressive of much satisfaction.

"Nay, Léon, you are a cheat, sir!" said his master, angrily, after a close examination of the collar, which on other occasions had served him for the transmission of billets relating to both love and battle. "Go, sir!" but the noble animal crouched at his feet, forced his paw under the collar, and struggled to break it from his neck.

"The key! the key, Cudjoe!" he cried; and the slave thrust his huge hand into a kind of Pandora's box made in his lower garments, from which, among a heterogeneous display of broken pipes, chicken breast-bones, beads, ebony hearts, broken dirk-knobs, charmed relicks, and spells against obeahs, fetahs, and melay men, he produced the key to the collar.

His master unlocked it, and stepping aside with his back to his men, he secretly slid aside the smooth plate which constituted its inner surface, and displayed an opening nearly the whole length and breadth of the collar. From this concealed repository, which he thought known only to himself and a fair inamorata, then in a distant land, he took a folded scrap of paper.

"Curse this prying knave Velasquez!" he muttered; "how in the devil's name could he have learned this secret? But how or when, he has made good use of it," he cast his eyes over the note upon which the rays of the lamp fell brightly through a carefully opened crevice in the sides of the lantern.

"Well, men," he said, turning to his party, "I

find Léon has been a trusty messenger; Velasquez has written upon his collar what chances await us at the old villa. There are but two old slaves, the old man and his daughter, besides his trusty nephew and secretary, Hebérito Velasquez! Onward. Lead, my trusty Léon!"

"How I do hate such treacherous tools," he said mentally, as, preceded by his dog and followed by his men, he threaded the forest; "open villany were virtue to such secret machinations. And against an uncle too! who has been but too indulgent—that he may a little earlier have his heaps of gold to squander upon his debaucheries. Holy father! if I did not fear a general mutiny throughout my squadron, by reason of our late scanty harvest on the seas, I would not lift a finger to help this roué to his wishes. But fate, fate! I am the football of circumstances! How often have I been led by my destiny to do deeds at which my soul revolted! Oh, God! oh, God! that I could be at peace with my own heart! Peace! there remains no peace for me! I have bathed my hand in blood, and there is no retracing my footsteps. My first mad crime has been the prolific parent of all my subsequent ones. If my arm had been staid at that fatal period by some good angel, I should have been an honourable—perhaps, a good man! That deed ruled my after destinies. My hand is now red—*red*! and nothing but my own blood can ever wash out the stains which crimson it. And is there a future, too, where men must give account of their earthly deeds? Is there a day of retribution for the murderer? Do the innocent and the guilty go alike to one destiny—to one reward or punishment? Oh, God! No, no!—There was one pure spirit released by this same bloody hand from the snowy bosom which confined it, panting to be free—and shall our destiny—mine and hers—be the same in the coming world? Oh,

no ! Oh, no ! she must be glorious and happy there ! and I—*there is surely a hell for thee*, LAFITTE ! ” he exclaimed bitterly. The wretched and guilty man pressed his temples for a moment, and turned to cheer his followers, striving in the action of the time to forget his own miserable thoughts.

The party had now issued from the dark recesses of the wood, the vivid green of whose foliage was just tinged with silver from the rising moon, and after passing with a swift tread around a hedge, or border of bamboo and orange trees, came at once in front of a large, old mansion, situated on the side of a gentle eminence facing the bay.

From the point where they first beheld the house, several avenues, overgrown with rank and luxuriant grass, diverged in various directions. One of these paths immediately in front of them was broader, and by the light of the newly-risen moon, which glanced along its whole length, seemed some worn by recent use. This avenue, which afforded to the freebooters a glimpse of the house containing their prey, was bordered by the rich-leaved oleander, numerous beautiful trees bearing roses of every dye ; with the jessamine, and grenadilla, yielding to the caprice of nature, entwining its luxuriant vines into gracefully-formed alcoves. At a gateway, obscured by the shade of many large trees standing around it, the party made a halt.

“ Now listen to my instructions, each man of you,” said their leader, as they paused here, awaiting their guide. “ There is to be no violence ; the persons of the old man and his family shall be held sacred. It is his wealth, not his life you seek. Let no man pull a trigger, if he love his life, this night. If we are attacked by the patrol, then, and only in the last emergency, use your fire-arms ; for one report of a pistol, would bring the neighbouring garrison down upon us in force ; and our little Gertrude, lying so

snugly in the Devil's Bowl below, would be intercepted by a king's cruiser before she could gain the open sea. Be cool and discreet, and we succeed," he added, as the men were about to murmur their assent; "be imprudent, and it will be a short grace from the red coats, and a swing from the nearest tree."

"Hist! here comes our guide. What, ho, there, the word!"

Creeping on his hands and knees, as he spoke, appeared from beneath a clump of bushes growing by the gate, a low, square figure, naked to the waist, from which, to his bony knees descended a garment equally participating in the honours of the petticoat and small-clothes. As he emerged from the shadow of the hedge into the moonlight, his black glossy hide glistened like a polished boot.

Gathering himself up to his full height, which was perhaps a little exceeding three feet eleven inches, he replied, with rapid, nervous articulation, while his teeth, and the white of his eye glittered in the moonlight,

"De word, mass' buckra? de word, mass' 'berto tell me say be, 'de collar.'"

"You are my man," he exclaimed; "lead on to your young master. Where does he await us?"

"Close by de big tam'rind tree, mass'! 'hind de soute wing ob de house."

"On, my beauty!" said he, gaily; the momentary depression having passed away; "lead on, we follow."

The guide darted again under the hedge, where the ground had been burrowed, leaving room for a full sized man to draw himself under with ease, by putting aside the lower branches of the armed hedge, encircling the grounds. Through this opening, each man, after getting upon his knees, passed through into the garden, followed by their leader,

who hewed with his cutlass a broad passage, through which to retreat. Here, forming his men into a line, he placed himself at their head, and with rapid and noiseless footsteps the whole party followed their sable guide through many dark and devious labyrinths, towards the rear of the villa.

CHAPTER II.

"There exists no treachery so criminal as that of youth against old age. But when with grey hairs are united the ties of benefactor and kindred, it becomes the blackest of crimes, claiming neither extenuation nor forgiveness. The man who would be thus guilty, is the basest of men—the most accomplished of demons."

M. ROLLIN.

"A lovely girl watching over the dying pillow of a venerable father, must be a scene over which angels love to linger."

HAMILTON'S ESSAYS.

A RUINED VILLA—A CASTILLIAN MAIDEN—THE VENERABLE SPANIARD—SCENE IN A SUBTERRANEAN APARTMENT.

While the band of piratical marauders were winding their way through the intricate paths which led through the grounds, we will precede them to the villa.

This was a long, low, steep-roofed edifice, with a dilapidated and sunken gallery running along its front, supported by a row of heavy, dark-coloured columns, some of which leaned inward while one or two were lying prostrate upon the green sward before the house. At either end of the gallery, stood a bronze statue of some classic hero, while in various points in front of the building and half-concealed by the wild and neglected shrubbery, were several marble statues, a few standing, but more broken into pieces and thrown down, fragments of which were scattered in every direction over the grounds. A green terrace, fronting the bay and bound with marble, up to which a ruined flight of steps ascended

from the shore, extended the whole length of the parterre, or ornamented garden, before the villa. The chimneys, and in many places the walls of the house had crumbled and fallen; windows were without shutters—the ascent to the piazza, the entrances to the dwelling, and the various walks diverging from it, were choked up with tall coarse grass, and fragments of brick, stone and marble. The whole premises presented a scene of melancholy desolation—the sad record of past opulence and grandeur.

The northern wing of the building, alone withstood the devastations of decay, and at this time, served as the abode of the family whose reported wealth, had held forth temptations to a band of pirates to invade the sanctity of its domestic circle. The opulent proprietor, an old Castillian soldier, lived in the enjoyment of vast possessions in Mexico, when one of the many revolutions in that ill-fated land, sent him forth an exile to other shores. With the value of his estates exchanged for Spanish coin and vessels of gold and silver, or melted down into ingots, and accompanied by his only child, a beautiful dark-eyed Castillian girl—a nephew whom he had adopted, and one or two faithful servants, he came to Jamaica, and purchased the estate on which he now dwelt, from one of those old, ruined planters, who once lived princes of the island.

The old Spaniard's heart was broken by his exile. His proud spirit was fallen, and he had become again a child, and the child of his bosom, the young Constanza Velasquez, was the only solace of his age and solitude. But the nephew, turned upon his benefactor, and like the serpent, stung the bosom that nourished him.

The hour of vespers had long passed, and Constanza kneeled by the couch of her father.

Her figure was round, finely developed, and dis-

played to advantage by a laced jacket, or bodice of black satin, enriched with a deep lace border closely fitting her shape. The curve of her shoulders was faultless, terminating in arms that would have haunted Canova in his dreams. On either wrist sparkled a diamond button confining the bodice at the cuffs. At both shoulders it was also clasped by a star of emeralds. Her fine raven hair was drawn back, and arranged in the form of a crest of tresses falling around her finely-turned head. A single white flower was secured in a rich curl above her forehead, by a gold-wrought comb, inlaid with many coloured stones. Over her head was thrown a white mantilla or veil, fastened on the comb by a pearl pin, so disposed as to fall down the back, to the feet of the wearer; yet it could be readily brought forward and dropped over the whole person. At this time, it was gathered in folds, and hung gracefully on her left arm.

Beneath her robe of white satin, worn under the bodice, and richly flowered with net work of silver, appeared, fitted in a neat Spanish slipper, a foot—such as poets of the northern clime see in dreams—of the most perfect and fascinating symmetry. The complexion of the maiden was a rich olive tinge, mellowed by the suns of sixteen Indian summers. Her eyes were large, dark, and expressive, shaded by long silken lashes, even darker than her dark shining hair, giving them, when in repose, that dreamy look, which the pencils of the old Italian masters loved to dwell upon with lingering touches. They spoke of deep passion and gentleness, while a smile of light danced perpetually in their radiant beams. The general character of her extremely lovely features indicated great sweetness of disposition and ingenuousness. The timid expression of her eye, evincing indecision, was relieved by a firmness about the mouth and the maid-

only dignity which sat upon her beautiful forehead. In her left hand, she held a diamond crucifix suspended from her neck by a massive gold chain, each link in the shape of a cross. Upon her right arm, reposed the majestic head of her venerable parent, her delicate fingers playing with the silvery, shining ringlets that flowed about his neck, and curled upon his massive forehead. His features were sharp and rigid with illness and settled grief; and his dark eye was lustreless as he gazed up into the face of his child.

"Have you said your prayers to night, my child?"

"I have, dear father; and they ascended for your recovery. Oh, that the sweet mother of our Saviour would grant answers to my prayers!" she said looking upward devotionally.

"She will, she will, Constanza," replied the aged man, "for yourself, but not for me! I have lived my allotted space. I must soon leave you, child. Be prepared for it, my daughter! Listen! I dreamed this afternoon that I saw the blessed Virgin, and she was the image of yourself."

"Nay, father, let not your love for poor sinful Constanza lead you to sin in your language," interrupted his daughter, blushing at the unintentional flattery, while she trembled at its seeming impiety.

"So, so, but yet hear me, child," he interrupted impatiently; "when I gazed upon her, wondering she was so like you, she changed, and instead of you, I saw your mother! How much like her you look just now my child! Bend down and let me kiss your brow." The fair girl bent her brow to her father's cheek, her dark locks mingling with his white hair.

"You do not remember your mother," uttered he, after a moment's affectionate embrace; "poor child! she was very beautiful. Your lofty brow is hers, the same pencilled arch—the same drooping lid—

and when you smile, I almost call you, 'my Isabel!'"

"Am I so like my sainted mother, father? I wish I could recollect her or recall a feature," she said, placing her finger on her lips in the attitude of thought—"but no, no, it is vain!" she added, shaking her head mournfully, "her image is gone forever."

"Oh no, not forever, my child, you shall meet her again in heaven."

All at once a cloud of sorrow passed across his troubled features, and grasping in his trembling and withered fingers, the soft, round hand of his daughter, he said in an earnest manner,

"Constanza, I feel that I cannot leave you, my unprotected dove! in this sinful world alone. What will become of you, my child, when I am gone? Heberto!" and the old man's eye flashed with anger as he repeated the name, "Beware of Heberto! Oh, that the proud name of Velasquez should be dishonoured by such a branch! Fear him, my child, fear him as you would the adder that winds his glistening folds along your path;" and the old man clasped his skeleton fingers upon the sparkling crucifix which lay upon his breast and after remaining silent for a few moments, he lifted his aged eyes to heaven and said, "Holy Mary! take her! she is thy child, thy sister! Be a mother to my child, dear Mary, Mother of Jesus! and as thy beloved son surrendered thee to the care of his beloved disciple while he hung expiring on the cross," and he pressed fervently and devotionally the jewelled representative to his lips, "so do I, a poor penitent worm of the dust, here and on my dying bed, give up to thee, my child—my only beloved child! Thou hast her mother in heaven. Oh keep her daughter while on earth! Mary, Mother! in the language of thy dying son, I say, 'Mother, behold thy daughter!'"

The venerable man, who in his momentary devotion had raised himself from the sustaining arm of his daughter, as he uttered the last words, fell back upon the pillow exhausted.

"Oh, Agata! Agata!" shrieked the deeply-affected and terrified girl, "Come! hasten! my father is dying."

The door of the anti-chamber burst open, and the tall figure of young Heberto Velasquez stood before her as she turned to look for her aged attendant, wrapped in a dark blue cloak, and his features shaded by a drooping sombrero.

"Ha, my charming cousin! what has tuned that pretty voice so high," he said in a gay, yet unpleasant tone; at the same time coming forward and bending gracefully down, he passed his arm around the waist of the lovely girl.

The maiden sprung as if a demon had laid his polluted hand upon her person. "Heberto! Señor Velasquez!" and she stood before him as she spoke—her eye flashing with maidenly indignation—her cheek glowing with insulted modesty, and her majestic figure and attitude like that of a seraph whom Satan had dared to tempt. "What mean you, sir? begone! Would you press your hateful suit to the daughter, over the corpse of her father? Begone, I hate you!—more than I have ever *loved*—I now *hate* you! Oh shame, shame! that I should ever have loved *THEE*!" and her lip, eye and brow, expressed withering scorn.

"Leave me, sir!" she added, as she saw that he moved not. But the bold and unblushing intruder, although his eye quailed before the proud look of the maiden, stood with folded arms, a fierce brow, and malicious lip, gazing upon her, as she turned to bathe the aged temples of the unconscious invalid and restore him to animation. "Leave me, sir; Oh, let not my father revive and find you here. It

will kill him. You know he cannot endure you, soulless man, since you brought that fatal will for him to sign."

"Ha, do you throw it in my teeth, pretty one! But prithee tell me, when first learned you the part of tragedy queen? *Nombre de Dios*, my pretty cousin! but you play your part excellently well."

"Scorner! Insulter! away—Oh that the count were here to chastise insolence!"

"The count," slowly repeated Velasquez, grinding the hated appellation between his glittering teeth, as he slowly articulated it.

At this moment the old man unclosed his eyes. "Go, sir, go—would you murder him?" she exclaimed, while her dark eye flashed with anger.

"He will die full soon enough when his ingots are gone," repeated Velasquez, scornfully. "I will go, my queenly cousin; but the time perhaps may not be far off, when you will sue for this same Velasquez to stay, and with clasped hands and tearful eyes pray him to speak you kindly; then will he remember this evening. *Adios, estrella mia!*" he added with a mock, sentimental air, and kissing his hand, while he cast over the voluptuous outline of her shoulders, as, in her sacred duty she bent affectionately over her father's form, a glance of mingled desire and hatred, he pressed his hat over his eyes, folded his cloak closelier about his form, and left the apartment.

With a firm and rapid pace he passed through the hall, and traversed the deserted apartments of the large mansion, his way lighted by the moon, which poured in floods of radiance at the open and shutterless windows. Opening, and closing carefully after him, a door which communicated with the opposite wing, he descended a broken staircase, into a dark vault beneath, and unlocking a small door

concealed on the outside by thick shrubbery, he pushed aside the bushes, and stood in the moonlight.

"By the blessed Baptista!" he exclaimed, as he emerged from the secret portal, "if these men betray me! Yet, without me they cannot hunt out the old dotard's hoard. But if I am the buccaneer's tool, you have lost your wits, Velasquez, if he shall not be yours." And the dark plotter against a helpless old man, and his lovely and unprotected child, smiled inwardly at the pleasant thought his fertile brain conjured up, as he paced to and fro, beneath the shade of a large tamarind tree, which grew near that wing of the mansion.

"What can keep them?" he muttered, as a fancied sound in a clump of bushes, upon which his eye was often turned, stayed for a moment his footsteps.

"It is a full half hour since they answered my signal. Cesar has been long absent! The black loiterer should have had them here, ere now."

"A shrine to thee, patron saint!" he suddenly exclaimed, devoutly kissing a medal, suspended to his collar, "there is the square figure of my naked Adonis; and that tall figure! I know it well; once seen it is not soon forgotten; and there follow his sturdy villains. Now, Herbérto Velasquez, thou art a made man!"

"Señores, buenos tardes," he said, gaily advancing a few steps to meet the approaching party, as it emerged from the avenue, and traversed the terrace to the place of appointment. "My good sir captain, you are right gladly welcome to my poor domicil. If it please you, draw up your men in this shade, while we walk aside," he added, proffering his hand to the leader of the party.

"Sir Spaniard, pardon me that I grasp not the hand of a villain," replied the chief, without removing his hand from the cutlass hilt, upon which it

mechanically rested. "Nay, start not ! and leave that rapier in peace. I know you, though we have met but seldom. Thanks, or courtesy, I owe you not. This adventure is not of my seeking ; it is the ill-begotten offspring of mutiny on the part of my men, who will be in no other way appeased, and of treachery, ingratitude, and base villany on your own. Now, Señor, to business ; but let there be no friendship, and but few words between us."

Velasquez bit his lip in silence, and his inferior spirit shrunk within him, as these biting words rung upon his ear ; and the penetrating, self-powered gaze of the pirate rested, while he spoke, full upon his features. But his love of wealth overcame any momentary struggles of wounded pride, and he replied in a less assured tone than he had used, when first addressing his companion.

"It is well, Señor," he said, carelessly, "if you choose to be captious on so slight a matter. But 'tis a blessed chance my pretty cousin heard not your romancing. I would wager my gold-headed rapier against the iron one you wear, that she would have loved you outright."

"Your sword is more likely to be lost in such a wager, than in one of battle," was the contemptuous reply ; "but I came not here to lay wagers with you, Don Velasquez, either of coin or battle. To the matter in hand. We have no time for idle dallying, and I am not given to bandying words. For the privilege of taking possession of the large sum of money in the possession of your uncle, you are to be allowed one-half for your own personal use, on condition, that without turmoil or bloodshed, injury to persons or property, you conduct my men to your uncle's strong-hold. These," he added, after a moment's silence, "are the terms we made in Kingston. Say I not well, Señor?"

"There remains one other condition," replied

Velasquez, with the caution of practised villany; "that mutual secrecy be sacredly observed between us, in relation to the removal of the treasures."

"Even so, wary Señor Velasquez; that the robbed old man may lay all censure upon the pirates, whom you would make the scape-goat of your treachery to your uncle, and curse them when he talks of his loss to his sympathizing nephew, if, haply, he lives to relate the sad story. Well, lead on, Señor, we follow," he added, sternly.

"Call two of your strongest men," said Velasquez, "let them accompany us, and command the rest to stand as close as possible with their weapons ready for use, in case of alarm; and enjoin upon them to observe the strictest silence. Now, sir! shall we move?"

"Théodore, be alert, our lives depend upon it," said the chief to his young attendant; and, followed by two of his men, he approached the secret opening, guided by Velasquez, who had constructed it for his own private admission into the vault, when his lavish purse required replenishing; although, a certain indefinable respect for his name and respectability among men, prevented him from openly robbing his benefactor, or removing sufficiently large sums to excite suspicion.

Accident, in some of his visits to Jamaica, had thrown him into the company of the commander of the schooner, with whom, from a supposed congeniality of character, he sought to cultivate an intimacy. Ignorant of human nature, whose outward seeming is often the most false, and anxious to be regarded by the outlaw as a caballero of mettle; without knowing his exact character, and thinking he must assimilate himself to the false standard of an outlaw set up in his own mind, he threw into his manner a recklessness, lawlessness, and ferocity, which was, however,

natural to him, disgusting to the chief, who took no pains to conceal his contempt for him. Subsequently, a knowledge of a threatened mutiny among his men, suggested to the dark-minded man a scheme, not only to gain wealth himself, without suspicion, or rather, proof of illegal acquisition, but to do the pirate, whose fellowship, like the cur who is beaten, he coveted the more he was spurned, a favour that should purchase his good will.

Putting aside the thick clumps of the oleander, concealing the secret opening into the vault of the building, Velasquez and his companions entered the low-arched room communicating with the apartment above, by the shattered stair-case he had descended on quitting his cousin.

"It is too dark to place a foot! Are you provided with a lantern?" he inquired, in a whisper, carefully and without noise, closing the door, as the last man entered.

"Here is one," said the seaman nearest him, opening, at the same time, one side of the night lantern, with which nearly every man was provided.

The guide took it from him, and passing round the stairs, opened a door he had purposely left unlocked, and entered a long damp passage, the extremity of which lay in total darkness. The outlaw placed his hand upon his stiletto, and glanced, with habitual watchfulness, around him, as he approached its obscure and suspicious termination. At the end of the passage, which they crossed with light footsteps, they passed through another door, the key of which was in the lock, and entered a low-vaulted room, directly under the inhabited wing of the mansion.

The floor was paved with large flat stones, and

besides the door, through which they entered, there was no perceptible outlet.

"Here is the room adjoining the money," said Velasquez, in a low, husky voice, with his face averted from the gaze of him whom he addressed. "Be silent; the least noise will betray us:—Hark! did you not hear the report of a gun? No, it was a movement overhead." The momentary suspicion and apprehension of detection, which are the attendants of guilt, passed off, and he continued,—

"Look at this wall, sir! you see it is perfectly smooth; yet through it we pass to my uncle's gold bags," said he, with a forced smile, as he shook off his fears, and those qualms of conscience which tortured even his hardened spirit. Then, pressing against one of the sides of a large square stone, it turned half way round, on a concealed pivot, and displayed a narrow opening on either side.

"This is too small; we cannot pass through it," said the pirate, now speaking for the first time since entering the vault.

Without replying, Velasquez pressed the sides of the two lower stones in the same manner, and two dark, narrow passages, nearly the height of a man, and so wide, that one could pass sideways, were opened in the wall.

Holding the lamp, so that it would illuminate the interior, a narrow, spiral stair-case was discovered, leading both into the upper room, where the outlet was concealed by a private door, and from the spot where they stood, into a subterranean vault beneath—constituting a medium of communication between the upper room and the vault, and from the stair-case, by revolving the stones, to the exterior of the building, by the way the party had entered.

"You see, my uncle is a true Spaniard, señor captain, in his taste for subterranean and secret

passages!" said Velasquez. "Pity 'tis, his ingenuity should not have had eyes to admire it before. He should thank me, by our Lady's benison, for making known to a man of judgment, like yourself, his passing skill. See! how secretly he can descend from his chamber to count his ingots! though to do the old dotard justice, he possesses not a miserly soul. This passage in the wall must, however, be set down to his nephew's ingenuity. It would astonish the old man, as much as if a new Roman miracle were hatched, (the saints pardon my impiety!) if he should press too heavily against the sides of his stair-way, and pitch, at once, into this room. I would give half I expect to possess this night, to see his aghast features, when he made the discovery. But I see you are impatient, señor captain,—let us proceed," he added hastily, as his companion sprung into the opening on the staircase; and following him, they descended into the vault, over which the lamp cast a dim and uncertain light.

The little room, or cell, in which they now were, was arched over-head—the walls were constructed of solid masonry, and there was visible neither outlet nor inlet, save, at the foot of the stairs, that which admitted them.

Around the room, which was about eight feet square, stood several antique marble urns, blackened by age and dampness, which had once constituted a part of the ornaments of the villa grounds in the days of its pride. These urns were covered with slabs, once capitals and pedestals.

A heavy cedar box, with a cover loosely thrown over it, stood on one side, while, on a raised floor, were candlesticks, urns, a tall crucifix, and many vessels for the altar and festal board, all of massive silver.

"Mines of Peru! but here is a goodly display of

wealth!" said the pirate, glancing his eye over the glittering array before him. "Let us see what these urns contain. Coin of silver! coin of silver! chains of gold! bracelets! glittering stones, and gems of price!" said he, as he removed one after another of the slabs which covered them. "And here, in this strong box," he continued, removing the lid, "what have we here? Holy Saint Peter! but here is a prince's ransom indeed;" and the rough corners of a heap of ingots sparkled with a thousand points in the rays of the lamp.

"Here, Señor Captain, is the prize you seek," said Velasquez, exultingly, after waiting until he had surveyed the costly heaps. "Let your men take the box of ingots, the vessels of silver, and the urn of golden chains, gems, and bracelets; for my portion, leave me the remaining urns of dollars—though something less than what you share—I am content with them. But remember your oath of secrecy."

"That will I, Señor Velasquez," said the outlaw, in a lively tone; "and I consent to this division."

The sight of so much wealth, which he had to lay his hands upon only to possess, and the prospect of restoring discipline in his fleet, overcame for the moment his contempt for the tool that served him, and his regret at taking possession of the wealth of a defenceless old man. "But," he argued, as he and others, under similar circumstances, had argued before, "if I do not take it, Velasquez will; but I have sworn on bended knee that a sacred portion should be reserved for the daughter! Innocence has been too long the victim of guilt! The last shall now be subservient to the first. Come, Señor Velasquez," he said abruptly, aloud, "let us to work. Here, Gaspár, you and Nicolás raise this box; it is weighty, but you were not blessed with the neck and shoulders of bulls for nothing. No!

not move it? Then lighten it—there—thats' well. Now bear it to the outside, and bid Théodore send Matéo and Carlos back with you—be silent and speedy."

The men, placing an open lantern upon the cover of the box to light them through the dark passage of the building, disappeared slowly up the stairs with their heavy burden, while the two principals who remained, the one—with folded arms leaning against the side of the vault, and the other, with his right hand thrust into his bosom, the left resting upon a slab—stood silently and in darkness awaiting their return.

CHAPTER III.

“The wealth in gold, silver, and jewels, brought away from Mexico by the Spanish exiles, exceeds belief. Their riches, ultimately, by presenting temptation to the lawless and vicious, became the instruments of their destruction. In some of the West India islands, the military were often called from their posts to defend remote dwellings, inhabited by these Spanish Dons, against bands of freebooters.”

HISTORY OF REVOLUTIONS IN MEXICO.

“A strong proof of Divine oversight in relation to human affairs, is the entrapping of the guilty in the gins they have set for others. This retributive system is daily presented to our knowledge. The most perfect consummation of Divine justice on earth, is, no doubt, when the criminal receives his just punishment, accidentally, by the hand of his intended victim.”

A SURPRISE—VELASQUEZ AND HIS UNCLE—A BATTLE WITH DRAG-
GOONS—LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT—RETREAT—DEPARTURE OF THE
BUCCANEERS.

AFTER Velasquez left the apartment of the insulted and distressed maiden, her firmness and womanly indignation forsook her with the object that called it into existence, and burying her face in the pillow of her father's couch, she wept bitterly.

“Daughter! Constanza! why do you not speak to me?” called the old man in a tremulous voice, his consciousness gradually returning. “My child weeping! do not weep for me, my dear Constanza. I—am—better—better—much—quite—quite well,” he feebly articulated in a broken voice, which contradicted his words. “It grieves me to see your

eyes in tears ; let me take your hand in mine, *mí alma* ! Tell me why those tears ?” he inquired, with parental kindness.

“ Nay, I weep not, father,” replied the lovely girl, brushing the fast falling tears from her eye-lashes ; “ now that you are well, I am happy, very happy,” and she laid affectionately her dimpled hand upon her parent’s fevered brow. “ Oh, I have dreamed a fearful dream, *mí alma*,” suddenly spoke her father, starting with the recollection. “ I dreamed that Velasquez, with a guilty lip, sought to desecrate your virgin cheek—”

“ Nay, nay, my dear father, it was but a dream,” interrupted the blushing girl, with a nervous rapidity in the tones of her voice. “ Will you not sleep ? the hour wears late, and I would see you sleep. Oh, my father, try and sleep for your Constanza’s sake—live for your child,” she said, as a sense of her loneliness, if he should be taken from her, coming vividly to her mind, alarmed her.

“ I will, I will, daughter. Do you not recollect, sweet wife, when first I called you mine ; you were young, then, and beautiful ; ’tis a great while ago, and yet you are still as lovely as when crowned a virgin bride. But methinks time has changed me strangely ! Why do you weep, Isabel ? We are not all alone. Our little daughter is with us. Shall Constanza not be our earthly blessing ? When I am old and feeble will she not bless our pillow ?”

“ Father ! father ! oh, my dear, dear father ! do you not know your daughter ? your own beloved Constanza, who speaks to you ?” cried the distressed girl, as from his wandering language, the conviction of her father’s danger pressed upon her mind.

“ Yes, my child,” said the aged parent, recovering from his temporary alienation of mind, “ you are indeed Constanza !” and she kneeled by his pillow, and was pressed affectionately to his bosom.

Whilst father and daughter, locked in each other's arms, presented this lovely and touching picture of filial and parental love, a low murmuring, apparently from the vault beneath, aroused them from their endearing interchange of affection.

"Hist, child! what sounds are those?" She raised her head and listened; and the ringing of metal, and whispered words came up from below.

"Blessed Virgin! there is mischief near," she cried, in alarm.

"Jesu, Jesu Maria! my ingots! my gold!" exclaimed the old man, clinging with the penurious characteristic of opulent old age, to that wealth he could no longer use. "There are robbers below! my child, oh, my child, you are a beggar!"

With suddenly bestowed strength he sprang from his couch, and seizing a pistol hanging near him, he pressed with his thumb the knob from which he took it, and a narrow door, hitherto concealed by the peculiar architecture of the room, flew open, displaying the winding stairway leading to the vault, and at the same instant a light flashed full in his haggard face from the aperture.

"We are discovered!" shouted a voice from below.

"It is the old man!" exclaimed Velasquez; "finish him—dead men tell no tales;" and a click of a pistol followed the words of the speaker.

"What mean you, sir Spaniard," interposed the deep, manly voice of the pirate; "would you do murder? What fear you from a childish old man? For shame! put up your pistol. Be lively, men," he added, with a quicker tone, "and convey this last load to the men without.—Stand back, Señor Velasquez," he cried in a loud voice; "attempt to pass this stair, and, by St. Barabbas! little service shall this night's treachery do you. Cielos! what is this!" he exclaimed, as the blood spouted from the temples

of the Spaniard, whilst the report of a pistol, levelled by the old man at the scarcely seen marauders, thundered in the close vault like the explosion of a mine. The Spaniard sprung backward, and fell dead upon the urns of silver, for which he had sold both honour and life, with a fearful execration upon his livid lip.

"Thus perish treachery by the hand of its victim," exclaimed the pirate. "This is likely to be no small night's work; stand where you are Señor," he added, addressing Don Velasquez, who was descending the stair-case, "there shall no harm come nigh you; the man you had most to fear has received the reward of his deeds. Stay your hand, old man! do you dare me with steel?" he demanded, as he struck up from his hands a glittering rapier, he had seized to defend the stairway after discharging the pistol.

"Mother of God! what noise is that without? one—two—three, pistols! my signal! Ho, Carlos, Matéo, what?" he emphatically demanded, as his two assistants rushed past the old man and leaped into the vault. "What, villains, what?" and his voice rung through the passages.

"We are surprised, sir! The report of the pistol, and the shrieks of some old slaves, were answered by a shout from a distance. Immediately a blue light illuminated the barracks, and a musket was discharged to give the alarm. Just as I came in, I could already hear the tramp of horses, and the clanging of armour along the highway. There must have been mounted troops abroad to be on horse so soon." This information was given with rapidity and energy by the seaman.

"It is as I feared," said the chief, calmly, "the dragoons are upon us!" and drawing his cutlass, "follow!" he cried to his men. And as the speediest way of gaining the outside of the building, he sprang

up the stairs into the room above, gently putting the old man aside, as he emerged into the chamber.

"Save, oh save my father!" shrieked his daughter, who had clung to his neck during the scene we have described, striving to prevent him from rushing below, and, who now threw herself upon his breast, intervening her person as a shield between the pirate's cutlass and her parent's bosom. "Save, oh spare his life!" and she extended her arms imploringly. "Take, take all, but let my father live."

"Fear not, fair maiden," replied the chief in a tone of deep respect, that fell like the voice of hope upon her heart, struck with her extraordinary loveliness; "do not be alarmed, your lives and honour are sacred in the hands of Lafitte!"

"LAFITTE! oh God!" shrieked the maiden; and raised her eyes to heaven, clasped her snowy fingers and would have fallen, had not the outlaw caught her in his arms.

"Oh my daughter, my daughter!" cried the helpless old man, weakened and nervous from excitement, "what will become of you?" and falling upon his knees before the pirate, he supplicated his mercy.

"Oh, take all, take all—gold, jewels, all, but leave me my Constanza—my only child! the blest image of her mother!" and the furrowed cheeks of the old father, as he pleaded for his child, were running with tears. "For the sake of thy mother," he continued, with energy, "for the sake of the blessed Virgin, take not away my only child!" and the old man clasped the knees of the buccaneer, and fell upon his face and wept.

"Venerable Señor, rise up, your daughter shall not be taken from you," replied Lafitte, raising tenderly the prostrate old man from the ground.

Constanza, when she felt that the pirate supported her form, at once, by a strong mental effort, rose superior to her weakness, and was preparing to bound from him ; but when she saw that he did not detain her, and that he spoke kindly and soothingly to her father, she thought a voice of so much tenderness, could not belong to so bad a man as the pirate had been represented to her. And when he placed her father's form in her arms, she looked up into the outlaw's face with greater confidence.

"Señor, I will believe you, we will trust in you, for, oh ! what else can we do ? but go, do go from us ! take the gold you came for, and depart ! Leave me and my father ; we can be happy without wealth ; he is too old to use it, and, I—I care not for it—take it ; it is yours, freely bestowed."

"Maiden," he replied, with an embarrassed air, and a flush like shame suffusing his brow, whilst the shouts of the dragoons approaching the villa, rung unheeded in his ears. "Maiden, I thank you, and feel grateful for your confidence ; it is not ill placed. The treasure it is out of my power to command, or I would return it ; it is in the hands of my men, and at their disposal, not mine. But here," he added, after an instant's hesitation, kneeling, and taking her hand, which she instantly withdrew, "here is a treasure dearer to me than all else beside !" and he gazed with impassioned, yet respectful tenderness, upon the pale features of the surprised girl.

"Pardon me," he added with earnestness, as he observed the maidenly embarrassment, his abrupt address produced, "pardon me, that I make use of such untimely language, at this moment, but there is a tumult abroad—I hear the ringing of steel, the shouts of fighting men, and the firing of musketry. I must speak to you now ! Listen to me, lady, I beseech ! See, I am a suppliant at your feet !"

"Oh Señor, I implore you, think not of me! go! your men call their chief! Go, you will be taken, and your life will be sacrificed."

As she spoke, a rich colour played over her cheek, and mantled her brow, and her dark, up-raised eye, betrayed deep and strange interest, in the safety of the pirate—the fruit of a struggle between resentment, and kindness, in her bosom; and her dishevelled hair, fell, a dark cloud of ringlets, over her neck and bosom, which heaved like a gently agitated billow.

"Maiden, unless your lips pronounce forgiveness, ---without one ray of hope I cannot go. Speak, Señora, but one word!"

"I do forgive you, señor, but leave me. Hark, that shout! delay another moment, and you are lost."

"I will obey you, lady, and leave my cause to you and heaven!" he said, seizing, and pressing her hand to his lips; then, as the noise without increased, he drew a pistol from his belt, and casting back a lingering look, expressive of mingled hope and fear, while a smile mantled his handsome features, he rushed from the apartment on to the terrace. The next moment, she heard his footsteps dying away, in the direction of the sounds of contest, which from the firing and cries of the combatants, seemed to be already fierce and bloody.

Constanza, as the pirate disappeared, laid her father's head upon a pillow, and leaving him to the troubled sleep, into which he had sunk from exhaustion, leaned from the window, and looked forth upon the lovely moon, which, in its nightly watch, never shone upon a sweeter face.

The sounds of conflict had receded till they were lost in the distance; and all was still and motionless, save a few white clouds sailing along the blue heavens, a slight waving of the foliage

about the window ; and the irregular heaving of her bosom.

She stood, and communed with her own thoughts. " Strange ! stange," said she, mentally, " but that voice, so rich, and full of tenderness ! how my heart bounded, when I heard him address my poor father ! where can I have heard it ? How singularly it affected me ! and can he be Lafitte ? that dreadful man ! proscribed among men—a price set upon his head ! hated, shunned, and feared by all ! Yet, how very noble looking he is, and so humane ! And his eyes, how dark and piercing. He is certainly, very handsome ! But," and her cheek paled, as she gave utterance to her thoughts, " oh, holy Virgin, I fear him, the language he used ! oh, lost, lost Constanza ! If beloved by this outlaw, better have been the bride of Velasquez, than the—the—oh, dear Madonna, help now, for I know not what to do !" and she covered her face with her hands, and the tears forced their way through her taper fingers.

" Oh that Alphonse were here," she at length continued ; " my own Alphonse ! Dreary weeks he has been absent, and yet he comes not. How have I watched day after day, for the glimmer of his white sails, upon the horizon. Oh, that he were here to-night ! when, when, will he come ?" and she rung her hands, and leaned despondingly upon the window.

Suddenly, the report of a pistol, followed by the sound of running feet, and now and then, a cry, as of men pursuing and pursued, startled her from her reverie ; and instantly, the scenes she had gone through, passed vividly before her mind, and she awoke, at once, to a full consciousness of the loneliness, and utter helplessness of her situation.

Hastening, instantly, as the noise increased, to the side of her father, as though protection could

be found in his feeble arm, she awaited, like the panting fawn, with throbbing heart, and alarmed eye, the coming danger. The sounds came nearer and nearer, and the hasty tread of armed men was heard upon the terrace, followed by a heavy sound, as if one had leaped, at a bound, from the ground on to the piazza. Hardly had Constanza time to move from the surprised attitude in which those appalling sounds arrested her, or conjecture their nature, when, springing in through the window, which she had just left to cling to her father, Lafitte once more stood before her.

His eye was illuminative with a fierce light, his lip was compressed, and blood was upon his brow and hand, which grasped a dripping cutlass.

"Oh God ! oh God !" shrieked the terrified girl, as this sudden apparition appeared before her, and fell senseless upon the floor. The outlaw though closely pursued, paused for an instant, with indecision, and then, hastily raised her with the air of one, who had, at the moment, decided upon a certain mode of conduct. Scarcely had he lifted her drooping form upon his muscular arm, when the window was filled with soldiers, thirsty for the blood of the daring outlaw.

"Back, sirs ; or, by the holy God, I will bury this weapon in this maiden's bosom !" he cried in a resolute tone ; and he grasped his cutlass near the point, shortening it, like a stiletto, and elevated his arm.

The soldiers hesitated to enter.

"What, cowards ! do you value a girl's life, when Lafitte is the prize ?" said the fierce voice of their leader ; "follow me !" and he sprung in at the window—to fall back upon his men, a stiffened corpse ; while the report of a pistol, discharged behind Lafitte, rung through the room.

"Ha Carlos ! is that you ?" said Lafitte, as he

looked round to see from whence the shot was fired.

"Yes, Señor," he hastily replied, "escape through the old man's door—down the stairs—and out through the passage. I have just passed through, and the coast is clear. I will keep the red devils at bay," said he quickly.

"Good, my Carlos—but the old man! we cannot leave him," and he pointed to the couch.

"Little will he know whether he be taken or left. The old man's commission has run out," said he, laying his rough hand upon the cold temples of the old Spaniard—"Dead, dead enough, señor!"

"Poor, poor child, how will she bear it!" said Lafitte with interest—"How now," he added quickly, "here they come like so many blood-hounds."

The soldiers without, who were engaged in loud and noisy altercation among themselves, as to who should first enter and seize the outlaw, now hailed with a shout the sound of hoofs, and the ringing of sabres and spurs, announcing a reinforcement.

"This fair girl must be my breast-plate—dash out that light, and follow me!" cried the pirate; and springing through the secret door, he disappeared with his lovely burden. Carlos darted after him and hastily closed the door, which received a shower of bullets from half a dozen horse pistols, levelled at his retreating form.

"Well done, Carlos," said Lafitte, approvingly; "now open your lantern and lead the way."

Rapidly traversing the dark passages, they soon left behind them the sounds of rage and disappointment, vented by their pursuers on entering the room, and finding their victims had escaped in some mysterious manner.

"That torch here, William!" said the dragoon officer, "how in the devil could he have escaped!"

There is no sign of an outlet here—he must be in league with Beelzebub to have slipped away thus. Ha ! who is this ?—old Don Velasquez !—and dead too !—Poor old soldier—money, daughter, life,—all in one hour ! But mount men, mount ! to horse !—this outlaw has escaped by some subterranean passage in this old Spanish house—and will double upon us like an old hare—Ho ! surround the house—to horse !” Leaping from the window he bounded across the gallery, and mounted, followed by half a score of his followers ; and putting spurs to his horse, he made a rapid sweep around the dwelling.

But before his pursuers had taken horse, Lafitte threaded the subterranean passages of the building, and emerged from the secret door into the bright moonlight, and with the speed of the hunted stag, crossed the open lawn and entered the avenue which led towards the sea-shore. This path was exposed for some distance, to the eye of an observer, from the piazza of the villa, and as the dragoons completed their survey of the grounds immediately surrounding the house, and met at the end of the wing, near the tamarind tree,—the white robes of the maiden glared upon the eyes of the leader.

“As I thought—on ! there is our game,” he cried, burying his spurs deep into the horses flanks, and dashing down the avenue, like the wind, followed at speed by his troop.

“Carlos,” cried Lafitte, as he heard the shout, announcing to him that they were on his track. “Now we must put forth all our energies, my brave man. You know the path—go before and we will yet distance them—fly !”—and on they went with the rapidity of deer, with the hounds but a bound behind them,—passing under trees—crossing from avenue to avenue, and endeavouring, by a

straight line, to gain the cliff instead of following the windings of the paths which were open to the cavalry. Breathless they flew, and at every turn, and opening in the shrubbery, the feet and voices of their pursuers were heard nearer and nearer.

"Now, captain, we are at the end of the grounds, and here is the gate—stoop, sir," said Carlos, darting under the hedge, from which their ebony guide had crawled early in the evening, to conduct them on their expedition.

"Thank God! we are safe at last—they cannot pass that barrier," exclaimed Lafitte, as he paused a moment, to breathe on the outer side of the hedge, "and this fair maiden!" he added with sympathy, "she is yet unconscious!"

"Now, Carlos, once through this wood, without being intercepted, and we are safe—forward!" he said, in an assured tone; and raising his lifeless burden, he moved swiftly through the forest, while the shouts and execrations of their pursuers, as they found their prey had eluded their pursuit, rung in their ears.

The fugitives had nearly gained the cliff, when a sudden galloping on their left, told them that their pursuers had found a way to clear the hedge. Looking back, they discovered their arms gleaming through the trees, and the whole troop dashing forward in full cry.

Drawing his belt tighter around him, bringing his cutlass hilt to his grasp, and changing his still lifeless burden to the other arm, with renewed speed, the outlaw bounded through the dark glades of the forest. Every moment lessened his distance from his pursuers—and just as he was ascending a slight eminence, commanding a view of the sea, and near the verge of the cliff, beneath which their vessel lay—the foremost horseman was within pistol shot of them.

"Surrender, sir pirate ! surrender !" he shouted as he levelled his long pistol, and deeper plunged his spurs into the sides of his foaming steed ; the next instant horse and rider would have been upon the buccaneer, when drawing a pistol from his girdle, and half turning in his flight, he fired upon the dragoon. The ball sunk into the forehead of his horse, which, with one plunge forward, fell lifeless upon his rider—and the ball of his pistol, which he discharged while falling, passed through the cap of the pirate. The remainder of the troop were close upon him, but the fate of their comrade, for a moment checked their speed.

"Hold there, for your lives, men !" shouted their commanding officer who had been outridden by his troop—and now came up—"hold, do not fire, but surround and take him. It were better that he should escape, than that fair girl should be injured."

"A hundred guineas to him," he added "who captures him, dead or alive—but if the lady suffer harm, let him who gives the blow, beware !"

The soldiers sullenly returned their pistols to their holsters and drew their swords. But there were now other objects on which to exercise them ; for at the same moment appeared a party of the pirate's crew, armed with cutlasses and fire-arms, who, leaving the schooner, and marching inland, on hearing the signal for succour made by their comrades, were returning, without meeting with them—they having, with the exception of Lafitte, gained the shore by another route, with the loss of two of their number, shot down by the dragoons, and a portion of their booty. Striking their cutlasses against their pistols, with a loud noise—and cheering each other with shouts, they came on at a rapid pace, and before the dragoons could draw and cock their fire-arms to meet this new enemy, they were fired upon with fatal

effect, by the advancing buccaneers. Here and there, a rider fell from his steed at the discharge, while the wounded animals fled with wild cries through the forest.

“On, on ! revenge for our comrades !” cried the pirates, pressing forward to close with them ; creeping under the horses, and passing their cutlasses up through their bodies—dragging the riders, by main force from their seats, or springing behind them, and hurling them bodily to the ground. For a few moments men and horse, were mingled in a sanguinary and dreadful *melée*.

The leader of the buccaneers did not, however, derive any personal advantage from this reinforcement ; for the captain of dragoons, dismounting, as the pirates made their desperate charge, cried, “Have at you, sir pirate, for my own pleasure, and rescue of that lady ;” advancing, as he spoke, with his drawn sword upon his antagonist, who, from the time he had killed the horse and dismounted the dragoon—for a moment checking the pursuit—had stood at bay, and facing his foes, determined to fight his way, step by step, to his vessel.

His eye lighted up with pleasure, as he heard the challenge of the leader of the dragoons—a tall, gentlemanly-looking Englishman, with an herculean frame, and a strikingly military air.

Anxious to get safe to his schooner his lovely shield, whom he internally resolved should be forever his, although he had first taken her up to favour his own escape, when, closely pursued, he retreated to the villa—he still moved slowly backward, facing his advancing foe. In his left arm he supported Constanza, her unconscious head laid upon his shoulder, while he wielded his formidable cutlass in his right hand, upon which he received the ringing steel of the officer.

In vain the Englishman used every device of art,

and each favourite ruse, and as uselessly did he follow blow on blow, with tremendous force. The pirate coolly received his descending weapon upon his cutlass at every stroke, and acting only on the defensive, still retreated steadily to the verge of the cliff.

"Now have at you, sir Englishman!" he cried, as he reached the head of the defile leading to his vessel. "Now have at you, in my turn. If you love Lafitte so well, he will give you a lasting mark of his friendship. So, there!" he added, suddenly and emphatically, as the officer, at first making a feint, aimed a heavy blow at his head, which he intended should be his *coup de grace*. "So, there!" and while he received his antagonist's sword upon his own guard, by a peculiar motion of his cutlass, with the same movement of his arm, he whirled it from his grasp high into the air, and making a sweep over his head, his rapid cutlass whistling through the air, descended and nearly severed the left arm of the Englishman from his body. The officer groaned, and fell heavily upon the ground, while Lafitte descended with rapidity the narrow defile to his schooner.

"Ho! Théodore! are you there, my boy?" he said, as he saw the slight form of the youth upon the deck; "receive this lady, and convey her to the starboard state-room, and try to restore her. Jacques, be out of this place as soon as possible."

"The anchor is apeak, sir," replied his lieutenant; "and the boat is ahead with a tow-line: shall we move, sir?"

"No, no! hold on, here come the men! Spring aboard, every one of you!" The seamen came hastily down the gorge, leaving two-thirds of their number behind them, while the voices of the soldiers were heard in full cry in pursuit, some bearing wounded comrades, and others portions of the booty,

the most of which, was already safely got on board. As soon as the last man touched the deck, the commander uttered his orders for making sail with rapidity.

“Hoist away the jib and mainsail; set the top-gallant-sails and royals; we must make every thing tell! Give way, men!” he shouted to the manned boat ahead; “steadily! there she moves! bear off from that crag! bend to those spars, men! now she moves! Pull heartily and cheerily, men, or we shall be intercepted by a guarda costa!”

“A curse upon this night’s work,” he said to himself, turning and walking aft as the schooner yielded to the efforts of the crew. “This is well called the Devil’s Punch Bowl, and he is likely to have us all for ingredients, for his next bumper.”

In a few moments the dark-hulled schooner, under the sweeps, the slightly drawing royals, and by the aid of the tow-boat, glided swiftly over the black, glassy flood, and in a few minutes, moved through the narrow entrance of the basin into the open bay. Rapidly passing, with a strengthening breeze, the needles or pinnacles of rock which girted the little harbour, her tall masts covered with clouds of canvass, and bounding with a lively motion before the night-breeze, she left behind her the land, and the scenes of death and desolation her presence had created, and swiftly and steadily stood for the open sea.

CHAPTER IV.

"No reflecting man can gaze upon a field of carnage, with its disfigured and gory corpses, without feeling ashamed of his species! If a proud man, his pride will be humbled."

"To find desolation and death, where we anticipate the calm bliss of domestic peace and happiness, is a trial few minds are prepared to encounter."—SPECTATOR.

"Theirs was no hasty love, to bear for its bitter fruit a long repentance."—MARIA OF MEISSEN.

AN ARRIVAL—SCENE AFTER A CONFLICT—A MELANCHOLY
SPECTACLE—REVENGE PURPOSED.

THE round, white moon was just fading into the western skies, and the well-defined outline of the peak of St. Catharine was delicately gilded by the yet unrisen sun, while a roseate tint mantled half the eastern heavens, the morning subsequent to the scenes and adventures related in the preceding chapters, when a little white spot on the horizon attracted the attention of the wounded officer of dragoons, as, under the refreshing influence of the morning breeze, he recovered from the swoon into which he had fallen from loss of blood, after being struck down by the buccaneer.

Casting his eyes over the distant sea, he appeared to watch the speck with much interest; and surprise was manifest on his features, when, instead of receding, he perceived that it enlarged, and evidently approached the island.

"Can the buccaneer be returning!" he exclaimed; "but he might as well finish me, as leave me so!" and as he spoke, he raised, with a melancholy smile, his mutilated arm. "Well, Captain Adair,"

he continued, "you may hang your sword upon the willow now—this Lafitte has done for you! But that cannot be the pirate neither," he said, in a changed and eager tone; "his was a schooner, although she carried royals, like a sloop of war. Ha! there is another sail in her wake—a smaller craft—what can they be? There! the larger veers a little—two, three masts—she's a ship under topsails, and the other's a schooner, a tender perhaps. But yet he's not a John Bull!" and after a few minutes silence, during which the anguish of his wound overcame every other feeling, he continued—

"It is either a Frenchman or an American; but what can she want here? Ha, there fly Monsieur's colours!"

The vessels, which attracted the notice of the officer, were now plainly visible, about two leagues from the land. She was a large frigate, displaying the ensign of France at her peak, and the same national distinction also fluttered at the mast head of the schooner. Standing into the bay before a free breeze, with royals and sky-sails towering aloft, and lower studding-sails set on both sides, in less than an hour from the time she appeared a mere speck, like the flash of a sea-gull's wing on the horizon, she had passed the capes of the bay. Running close into the land, and furling one sail after another, she gracefully rounded to, and, accompanied by the tender, came to an anchor opposite the entrance of the recess, denominated the "Devil's Punch Bowl," and within the shadow of a gigantic rock, to which nature had given the outline of a huge granite fortress.

This vast mass rose abruptly over her tall masts, in enormous beetling heads, crags, and precipices, leaving a narrow belt of white sand at its base, upon which the waves of the bay peacefully unrolled themselves, when the winds were low, but over

which they leaped in a storm, thundering against the cliff, and roaring in the caverns, with terrific sublimity. As the last sail was furled closely to its yard, the dragoon saw a small boat put off from the frigate, manned by four men and a steersman. An officer in a naval undress, with the insignia of the rank of a French captain upon his breast and collar, leaned back in the stern sheets, as the boat moved swiftly over the water, gazing upwards upon the giant rock, rearing its dark mass against the sky,—admiring its castellated outline, and its dizzy crags, springing several hundred feet into the air.

The oarsmen pulled rapidly in to the beach at the base of the cliff, whose projecting verge, as they passed into its dark shadow, suddenly hid them from the eyes of the wounded officer.

“Lay to your oars briskly, men—one strong pull more—there, we strike!” said the French officer, as the boat, with a grating sound, grounded upon the beach, running half her length out of the water, on to the hard white sand.

The men shipped their oars and sprung out, respectfully raising their caps, as their officer passed by them in stepping ashore, and then turned to secure the boat from the action of the tide.

Delaying a moment to arm themselves with sabres and pistols, which they took from the stern, they hastily buckled them around their waists, and stood ready to follow their officer.

While his men were thus engaged, under the command of the cockswain—a mere boy in the uniform of a midshipman—the officer stood a moment, awaiting their movements, gazing, with folded arms and thoughtful eye, upon the fine appearance his motionless frigate exhibited, as, towering above the dark hull, her lofty masts and slender spars appear-

ed drawn with the accuracy of pencilling, against the sky.

He was a slightly-formed man, rather below than above the medium height of men, with a strikingly-elegant figure, finely displayed and relieved, by his blue frock and dark green cloak, falling negligently back from his shoulders in graceful folds. His forehead was high and expansive, over which, as, for a moment, he raised his velvet cap to meet the cool breezes from the sea, flowed, with almost feminine luxuriance, thick clusters of dark auburn hair. That softness of character, which this peculiarity anticipated, was, however, contradicted by the intellectual fulness of his brow, and the firm expression of his blue eye, which, although it might droop before a maiden's gaze, could flash proudly back the glance of a foe.

One lock of his hair seemed trained to lie over his forehead, and relieved the otherwise too perfect oval contour of his face. His complexion, naturally fair, was a little sun-browned, by exposure to the sun and seas of many climes; yet a healthy hue glowed upon his cheeks, while his upper lip was graced with a mustacho of the same rich colour of his hair. His lips were full, and rather voluptuous in their finely-curved outline, but, without any approach to sensuality. The general expression of his features, when in repose, as they now were, was intellectual, and, perhaps, melancholy. He might be above thirty years of age, though the juvenile and extreme beauty of his noble forehead, the suddenly-mantling cheek, and the curve of his mouth and chin, which a Hebé might have envied, would indicate, that he had seen even fewer summers. He would, in the eyes of a romantic maiden, have been the Raleigh of the days of Elizabeth—the Ivanhoe of chivalry.

"We are ready, monsieur," said the youthful cockswain, as he drew closer the belt that confined his weapons.

"Follow me, then, Montville; the men may all remain; and see"—he said, turning to them, "that you make no brawl with these Englishmen, as before! Those soldiers who felt your Gallic knocks, may take occasion to follow up their quarrel. If they approach, shove off at once, and lay on your cars beyond musket-shot."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the men, putting their shoulders to the boat, and floating her; while their commanding officer, followed by his favourite midshipman, crossed the smooth belt of sand, and winding rapidly around the base of the overhanging crags, came to a part where the descent was less precipitous. By the aid of branches, and jutting irregularities of the rock, they ascended the cliff, and, without pausing to glance at the magnificent panorama of woodland, sea, and mountain, spread out around them, entered a grove of pimento, whose deep green hue, presented a fine contrast to the unrivalled beauty of the lighter-tinged verdure underneath.

Their way lay by natural and artificial paths, through clumps of foliage of every variety and brilliancy of colours, now brightly tinted, as the sun-light shone through an occasional opening above, now black, in the impenetrable shadows cast by the loftier forest trees. After issuing from the grove, they wound through luxuriant bowers of West Indian vines, past a palm-tree, standing in lonely and towering pride, and spreading cocoas, and brazilettos, mingled with the vivid dyes of the plumage of the bamboo, orange, and tamarind,—the whole presenting, in the brightness of the morning, a gorgeousness of colouring, unknown to less genial climes.

They had now reached the hedge of aloes and palmetto, forming the boundary of the grounds surrounding the villa of Velasquez.

Winding around it in a direction contrary to that taken by the depredators of the preceding night, they soon came to a small, latticed gateway, partly hid in the hedge, and close to the unoccupied wing of the mansion. The gate, which his young companion was hastening forward to unlock with a small key handed him by the officer, was battered in pieces, and the dead body of a seaman lay in the threshold, with a fragment of a dragoon's sword, half buried in his head.

"Mon Dieu!—what mischief has been here?"—exclaimed the officer, stooping to examine the features of the dead man. "He is a Spaniard, and by his garb and arms, no doubt, a pirate. Cold, and stiff!" he added, touching his temples, "he has been long dead.—Allons! allons!" he cried to his companion, bounding through the broken gateway—"God preserve dear Constanza!"—and both drawing their swords, they rushed up the avenue, every few rods of which exhibited traces of a recent and severe fight.

By the body of a horse lay a dead dragoon, with the blood oozing from a pistol-wound in his head, grasping, convulsively, the body of a Spanish sailor. Although a deep gash cleft his cheek, he still lived, while a consciousness of the death-grapple in which he was held, overcoming the pain of his wound, he writhed his features into a terrible expression of horror—his black, lustrous eyes, rolled wildly in their sockets, and his feeble fingers vainly worked to release the vice-like grasp of the dead man.

"Oh, Señores, for the love of God, help me! Ay de mi—Ay de mi!—Ave Maria!" and he extended his arms, imploringly.

The officer arrested his rapid progress to the house ; his humane feelings overcoming his desire to proceed ; and, perhaps, he was at the same time anxious to learn the nature and full extent of the bloody signs surrounding him.

"Hold, Montville ! let us aid this wretch," he said, arrested by the imploring language of the sufferer. "What a fearful embrace !" With their united efforts, but not without the exercise of great muscular exertion, they disengaged the arms of the dead man from around the living body of his foe—who, during the slow-moving hours of the long night, had borne such unspeakable tortures. How fearfully was the dead avenged ! claspings in his close embrace the breathing body of his slayer !

"What, monsieur ?" inquired his deliverer, as the buccaneer grasped his cloak, and gave way to a shower of tears, unable to express, in language, his gratitude. "What means all this bloody work ? You, it seems, should know something of it !" and his cheek and eye betrayed the intensest excitement as he spoke. "Speak, speak !" he reiterated, as the man held up his clasped hands in silence : "Answer, man ! or, by Heaven ! I will give you to a worse fate, than the arms of this dead soldier."

The man shuddered at the allusion, and his eyes glared with terror.

"Mercy ! Señor, mercy !" he cried, clinging to his cloak, without looking up.

The impatient officer drew a pistol from his bosom, with a threatening air, when the Spaniard, with difficulty and hesitation, articulated,

"Lafitte !"

"He has been *here* ?" rapidly interrogated the officer. "Where is Don Velasquez, and his daughter ?"

"I know not, Señor ; yo no sé, yo no sé—"

The officer, without hearing more, freed his

cloak from his grasp, and darted forward, passing by pistols, cutlasses, and a portion of the pirate's booty, thrown away, in their flight. The sward was cut up, with the feet of horses, and blood reddened the green surface of the avenue, in many places. In a few moments, after leaving the Spanish sailor, they ascended the terrace, and came, at once, upon the scene of the severest conflict. With a sword in one hand, and a pistol in the other, the officer leaped over the dead bodies of two soldiers, and a headless seaman, and rushing to the front of the house, flew along the piazza, to an open window in the farthest wing. The sight that here met his eyes appalled him!

Upon a couch, in the extremity of the apartment, lay the corpse of the old man, cold and rigid. The floor was covered with pools of blood, and the dead body of a dragoon, with a pistol-wound in the forehead, lay under the window.

A deadly sickness came over his soul, as he gazed upon the horrid spectacle—his hand fell powerless, at his side, and he leaned against the window for support.

His more youthful companion, sprung into the room, and laid his hand upon the heart of the old man; but pulsation had ceased!

"He has been a long while dead," he said.

"Dead!" mournfully repeated the officer, half unconsciously, "dead, is he—and poor Constanza! is she living? or worse?" he added, in a hollow voice. "Oh, merciful heaven, blast me not, at one stroke, and so cruel a one!"

"To the rescue, to the rescue!" after a moment's silence, he suddenly shouted, in a voice like a trumpet, "ho! my men, all!—Alas, alas, Constanza!" he added, in a changed voice, "vain, vain, all in vain—but—there—is—*revenge!*" he slowly, and with strange distinctness, articulated. "I will

revenge you, terribly revenge you," and his eye lighted up with a fierce light, his form dilated, and his glowing features wore a fearful sublimity as he spoke.

Approaching the couch, he placed his hand upon the marble brow of the corpse.

"Señor Velasquez, your death, your grievous wrongs, shall be avenged. I make this cause of mine and yours, a sacred one!" and he kissed, as he spoke, the cold forehead, and the crucifix, which, grasped in the old man's hand, lay upon his breast, "You have not died, by ball or steel—deep griefs have killed you. Terribly! most terribly, you shall be avenged!"

"Ha! what more?" he exclaimed, as distant voices, and the tramp of horses' feet fell upon his ear. Springing to the window he saw, wheeling rapidly around the ruined wing of the building, a troop of horsemen, who drew up on the terrace, while their leader dismounting, and followed by two or three of his men, hastily approached the gallery.

The Frenchman immediately stepped forth to meet them.

"What, who have we here?" he exclaimed, cocking a pistol, which he had drawn from his holsters, as he alighted; but, observing the gentlemanly air of the stranger, and detecting his naval attire, he modulated his tone, to one of more courtesy.

"Your pardon, Monsieur! you are the Count D'Oyley, commander of the French frigate, in the bay, if I mistake not?"

The stranger bowed.

"This has been an unpleasant business," he continued; "a party of buccaneers, with Lafitte at their head, came last night, in strong force, robbed the old man, who, also, I am told, is dead, shot his

nephew, and carried off his daughter. We have been out, part of the night, in pursuit of them. Since our return, we find that, after a hard fight with another detachment, he escaped to his vessel, with the old Don's child, and immediately put out to sea."

"Are you ill, sir?" he inquired, observing the face of the officer grow pale at his recital.

"No, Monsieur, no!" replied the Count, recovering himself; "I thank you, for the interest you have taken in this affair. The old Castillian and his daughter, were not unknown to me. He once saved me from a conspiracy, aimed against my life. It was in Mexico. He now lies in that room, dead; and his daughter—Oh, Alphonse, Alphonse, where were you, in that evil hour?—But there is vengeance," said he, looking upward, "there is just vengeance of Heaven, and I will be its instrument! Adieu, Monsieur; I leave the burial of Señor Velasquez to your kindness. I must away! the business, which brought me here, is ended—alas, how ended! Adieu, Monsieur," he said, warmly pressing the hand of the sympathizing Englishman. Then hastily descending to the terrace, "Messieurs, adieu!" he added, raising his cap, as he passed the mounted dragoons; and then silently, and rapidly, accompanied by his young friend, he hastened to the shore.

After walking steadily onward, for many minutes, they emerged from the forest, on to the bluff, and on turning an angle in their path, encountered the officer whom Lafitte had wounded. He was slowly moving towards the villa, faint and weary.

"Gentlemen, for the love of God, ! a little water ! I am dying of thirst !" he said, addressing them as they appeared.

Again the humanity of the stranger, was called into exercise; and for the moment, forgetting his

own sorrow, in sympathy for the distressed soldier, he stopped, kindly supported him to the shade of a large tree, and despatched his companion back, to communicate his situation to the party at the villa.

"Can you tell me aught of Lafitte?" he inquired of the wounded man, as they awaited his return.

"Much, much," he replied, "he has left his mark, as he calls it, here!" and pointing, as he spoke, to his mutilated arm, he attempted to smile.

"You saw him, then! did he gain his vessel, as they tell me, with, with," and he hesitated, while his chest beat with emotion.

"Yes, I both saw and felt him! He fought like a tiger at bay, a better swordsman never handled steel. Had he been less than Lafitte, or the devil, he would not have escaped me—but he did escape me."

"And—and, with him—?" The Frenchman could say no more; his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth; but he was understood.

"The lady, whom we, at the post, call the Castilian nun, the Señorita Constanza! but she had fainted, and was unconscious of her situation," replied the dragoon.

"Oh, my God, my God!" ejaculated his listener, and groaning, he struck his temples fiercely and bitterly; and, deeply agitated, he paced the ground under the tree, in silence, until the arrival of Montville and a party of the wounded man's troop.

"Describe his craft, if you please!" he asked, of the dragoon, as he turned to go.

"A schooner with a fore royal—long, black, and very low in the water, with the masts much raking."

Bowing his thanks, he pursued his way, along the cliff, with increased rapidity, and recklessly

descending to his boat, he was, in a few moments, on the deck of his frigate.

His orders were given, to get under weigh, with a startling energy that surprised the crew, and infused into them additional activity. In a few seconds, the heavy anchor hung from the bows, the broad top-sails were unloosed, and extended to the breeze, and the tall masts, covered with folds of canvass. The commander, then accompanied by Montville, left the ship, for the schooner, which also, immediately got under weigh.

At first, the frigate moved slowly and heavily, but gradually gathering power, as sail after sail was displayed to the wind, she increased her speed, the waves dashed from her foaming path, and with a velocity that seconded the impatience of their commander, the two vessels sailed out of the bay, and stood westward.

The schooner, which now contained the commander of the frigate, immediately after gaining the offing, sailed in the direction of Carthagera, while the frigate hauled her wind, and bore up for the island of St. Domingo.

CHAPTER V.

"What tidings from the camp?"

"Heavy and full of wo, my lady."

"Speak! does my father live? was he unharmed amid the dread encounter of opposing hosts?"

"Lady, I grieve to tell the fatal news I bear—your noble sire—"

"Is ———?"

"Alas—no more!"

AT SEA—A PIRATE'S CABIN—REMORSE—SOLILOQUY—STATE-
ROOM—CAPTOR AND CAPTIVE.

THE pirate's schooner, which had now become the prison of the hapless Constanza, had long passed the capes of the bay, into which it had so gallantly sailed a few hours previous—and the outline of the mountains of Jamaica, were rapidly fading in the distance, before the outlaw, assured that there was no danger of being immediately pursued, prepared to leave the deck of his vessel.

"Keep her away Ricardo, with every thing she can bear, for Barritaria," he said, addressing the helmsman—"and call me if you see any thing suspicious; and before descending the companion-way, he cast one piercing glance around the horizon.

"Ha! a sail, and dead ahead!" he exclaimed, as his practised eye rested upon a scarcely visible gray speck upon the horizon, in the direction of his vessel's course. "Another—two! Keep her away a point, and let us reconnoitre them," he added, taking

his spy-glass, and closely surveying the distant objects.

The schooner kept steadily on her way, close-hauled to the wind, while the strangers came down upon them, with the wind nearly aft.

As they approached nearer, the foremost one showed the square rig of a large vessel, with royals and studding-sails set. In less than an hour from the time they caught the pirate's eye, they were within half a mile to leeward of the schooner—for at such a disadvantage had the pirate cautiously thrown her, by altering his course,—and distinctly displayed the tall and majestic apparel of a ship of war.

"A tiger, sir!" said Théodore, his young protégé, after gazing at the ship for a moment, from the top of a gun-carriage, through a focus, formed by his diminutive fists—"her teeth glisten like Cudjoe's, here;" and he looked toward the ungainly figure of the slave, who, with one long arm clinging to a stay, his head and body bent forward, and his lips drawn back with an admiring grin, was inspecting with much curiosity, the noble, and war-like spectacle which the strange sail exhibited.

"Do you know her, Señor?" inquired the helmsman, with deference in his manner.

"I think not, Jean," he replied musingly—"but she and her little tender seem to walk past us, as if disdaining to wet their cut-water with the same salt spray, which our pretty craft throws about her so merrily. Do you recognize her, Ricardo?"

"She is, I believe, señor, the French frigate *LE SULTAN*, that we saw going into Carthagená, as we were getting under weigh off Las Naranjas."

"Indeed!" said the buccaneer, looking for a moment steadily at the passing ship. "I suspect you are right—she was accompanied by a schooner—her yards are not square enough for an American:

an Englishman she is not ; she is too light rigged, and carries whiter canvass than John Bull. I suspect you are right, Ricardo."

"I know her, captain, by the length between her mizen and mainmast, and the rake of her main-royal-mast, as if it had been sprung," said the helmsman.

"You have a seaman's eye, Jean, and you are right too," he quickly added, as the stranger showed two or three lights—"that reads 'France !' But we have no time to dally in returning compliments. Hold to your course again, sir," he said, turning to the helmsman.

The schooner came closer to the wind, and rapidly held on in the direction from which she had diverged to avoid the strange ship, which, lowering her lights, silently and majestically with her companion, moved onward, apparently standing into the bay from which the schooner had just taken her departure.

"Théodore, how is our fair prisoner?" he inquired, as he descended into his cabin, accompanied by his young officer.

"She sleeps, sir," replied he, in a low voice.

"Poor girl, I almost wish she might not wake again to know her wretchedness," he said, feelingly. "It is my fate to bring ruin upon all around me. Has she spoken, or been conscious of her situation?" he abruptly inquired of the youth.

"I think not, sir," he answered. "By the aid of old Juana, who sympathizes with the misfortunes of the maiden, she was soon recovered from her death-like swoon, but directly passed out of it into a deep sleep. She is very lovely, Señor!" he added, with sudden animation.

"Poor lady;" said the outlaw, sadly, "I did not mean to take you from your father's bosom. But he was already dead!—And who slew him? My

act, if not my hand ! But I will seek to atone for the father's wrongs, by treating the daughter with all honour. Leave me, Théodore, I would be alone," he added aloud.

The iron swinging lamp, suspended above, cast a bright light over the cabin, and its furniture. The sides were pannelled with a dark-coloured, West Indian wood ; the floor was of the same material, and hard and polished, like marble. The ceiling was low, and crossed at intervals by beams. Pistols and cutlasses, arranged in fanciful figures, were hung around the walls, and stands of muskets and boarding-pikes lined two sides of the room. On a case, which stood in one corner, lay two or three steel caps, for boarders—a blunderbuss with a muzzle like the mouth of a bugle, stilettoes, and the various paraphernalia appertaining to a vessel, whose trade is war. On the side opposite to the companion-way, a door opened into a state-room situated farther astern, and now occupied by Constanza.

On a pin near the companion-way, hung the full dress of a Spanish naval officer. Various dresses of citizens, soldiers, and seamen, were suspended near it, constituting a wardrobe well adapted to one, whose mode of life compelled him, not unfrequently, to adopt disguises, adapted to his purposes. Rolls of charts, elegant rapiers, iron-handled broad-swords, canes, and a rifle, stood in a corner, and several articles of the ordinary apparel of seamen, lay about on camp stools ; several of which, with an oval table in the centre, a tall pedestal sustaining a handsome compass, constituted the only furniture of the apartment.

At the table, in the midst of the cabin, and within the dark circle cast beneath by the bottom of the lamp, sat Lafitte, his features so far thrown into shadow, that their expression was in a great degree concealed.

With his forehead resting upon his hand he leaned upon the table, in an attitude of dejection; nor had he opened his lips, or moved from that position which he occupied on entering the cabin and dismissing Théodore, for more than an hour. No sound but the gurgling of the water, as the vessel glided over the moonlit sea, the occasional song of the labouring seamen, or the hoarse cry of the helmsman, as he told the watches of the night, and the monotonous tramp of the officer of the deck over his head, broke the stillness reigning around him.

There are times when conscience will wield her fiery sceptre over the soul, compelling the guilty to hide their faces in horror! In that short hour, the whole of his past life passed before his memory, like some fearful pageant, before the vision of the fevered sleeper. He thought of his first crime—against a brother's life! of the blood-stained marble statue! of his love for his cousin, and the dark sea of passions into which he plunged in consequence of that love, and his subsequent jealousy! He called to mind, while a cold tremour passed over his frame, and a deep groan escaped him, his last meeting with that brother---the descending knife, and fatal blow---then his rapid flight, and his artful tale to the captain who saved him that night, as his frail boat was sinking in a storm! His voyage to the Mediterranean sea---his capture by the Algerines---his imprisonment and escape, by the aid of a Moorish maiden, whom he dishonoured and left---his fatal rencontre in landing---his imprisonment and escape in an open boat for Ceuti, and second capture by the rovers---his union with, and subsequent command of, their vessel---all in their turn, became the subject of his thoughts. His features changed, as he thought of the dark sea of crimes, through which he waded to that command.

Then came his capture by the Turks—his freedom, and rapidly rising distinction in their navy—and he pressed his temples violently, when he remembered that he had changed the cross of his religion, for the turban of the Mussulman. He was now chief of an armed horde, and now a combatant in the ranks of the Egyptians, against his invading countrymen. Once more he was on the sea, and an Algerine rover called him its commander! Then he was the captive of the Spaniard, and the Moro of Havanna became his prison. Liberated, again the quarter-deck of a pirate became his home, and the flag of Carthage waved to the breeze above his head!

“What matters it,” he suddenly exclaimed, “that I have gained the wealth of princes—that I have waded through crime and blood to the acquisition of the guilty fame that makes my name terrible!—that my hand has been against every man!—I am at last but a miserable being—penitent, without the power to repent—remorseful, without hope—a lover of virtue, without daring to seek it—banned of God—outlawed of my race—fratricide, murderer!—hundred-fold murderer! with the mark of Cain branded upon my brow, and burned deep—deep into my soul. Oh, God! oh, God!—if there be a God”—he cried, clasping his hands and lifting his eyes to heaven—“be merciful unto my iniquities, for they are very great!” And he fervently pressed to his lips the hilt of his rapier, shaped like a cross, and then dropped his head upon his arm, and wept, under the influence of feelings, which, at some seasons, will be experienced by the most hardened.

After a few moments silence, he continued, “Oh, for the days of childhood and innocence! I was then happy; then we—my brother!—my little brother and I—kneeled nightly in prayer by our bedside! How beautiful! We were taught by our

venerable parent to put up our prayers, first to the Virgin, and then to our sainted mother. Oh, would to God I had died then! Mother, you would have then embraced your son in heaven!—But no!—no!” as a ray of hope glanced over his mind, he exclaimed aloud, while his brow grew dark, “No! too—too deeply dyed in crime. With a brother’s blood I began—and should a brother’s murderer shrink from lesser crimes! Oh, how fatally consistent has been my life with its outset! Witness!” and he laughed, but his laugh was hollow and unearthly, as he spoke; “witness! I call ye to witness!” he cried, almost fiercely, “ye exulting demons, who madden me with your hellish triumphs—Ha! ha! ha! I will yet be your leader! If I cannot be the last in heaven, I will be the first in hell!” and he sprung from his seat, and wildly walked the cabin, under the influence of temporary insanity, while such tortures as only a fratricide can feel, harrowed his soul.

His massive forehead, lurid with the glare of the lamp, and contorted and writhing, as if the mind within conflicted with the agonies of the doomed, was lowered darkly over his burning eyes, which glowed with a fierce, lambent light, as Lucifer’s might have glowed when hurled from heaven. His finely-curved lip curled with a satanic expression of hatred and malignity: and his form expanded, as though under the influence of some strong passion, uncontrollable by human power. Suddenly he stopped, and stood with his arm outstretched in a menacing manner, while his dilated figure exhibited the attitude a painter would have seized, to represent Cain standing over the prostrate body of his murdered brother.

A low exclamation, in the adjoining state-room, of mingled terror and surprise, recalled him instantly to his accustomed self-possession, for the moment con-

trolled by the intense passions, which, from time to time, aroused by his guilty conscience, enslaved his spirit. The dark, scowling brow, resumed its serenity and beauty—the wild fire of his eye mellowed into a milder lustre—the impassioned and excited form became subdued and passive, under a calmer and happier influence ; and approaching the door of the state-room, with a smile, that might have won a maiden's love, mantling his lip, and in a voice modulated to the gentlest tones, he inquired after the welfare of his lovely captive.

We must now return to the period when Constanza was first restored to consciousness. The youthful officer had, with delicate address, given her up, after his chief had resigned her to his charge on gaining his vessel, to the care of an old negress, wife of the steward of the schooner, who, with that instinctive sympathy which is the characteristic of woman—even of the old and ugly, for the young and lovely of their sex—received her charge with many exclamations of sympathy and regret.

“Sweety lady—ol’ Juana hab pity much,” said she, receiving her lovely charge, and laying her upon a sofa in the interior state-room of the vessel, which was fitted up with great taste and elegance. “How white an’ sof’ dis pretty han’, wid de gol’ ring—but ol’ Juana wont steal it off’ de little slender finger,” she added, as an habitual disposition to do so was evident, by the sudden motion of her hand and eye.

•“I wis’ de lady would open de eyes,” she continued, applying strong stimulants, and resorting to the usual means for restoring suspended animation.

“Hi, massa Théodore, you rub dat lily han’, while I rub dis, an’ bave de temple,” she said, with an air of importance, fully conscious of the respon-

sibility with which she was so unexpectedly invested.

The youth, who, at the command of Lafitte, had remained to assist in the recovery of the maiden, respectfully bent on one knee by the sofa, and with tenderness took the unconscious hand, brilliant with gems; and with the embarrassed manner of one who felt guilty of sacrilege, endeavoured to restore warmth and circulation to the lifeless member.

By degrees, the blood returned to fill the blue veins, her bosom heaved like the snowy breast of a wearied dove, and opening her dark eyes, she gazed vacantly about; but there was no soul in their expression—no intelligence or consciousness of surrounding objects.

“She look, but she no see,” said the nurse. “Marie! what big black eyes! dere she clos um’ ’gen! but she get life now—no matter—poor lily ’ooman go sleep;” and the maiden, again closing her eyes with a deep sigh, placed her hand under her head, and on that soft and lovely pillow, rocked by the gentle motion of the vessel, fell into a sweet and refreshing slumber.

The kind old nurse watched by her couch with the anxiety and tenderness of a mother over the cradle of her infant, occasionally replying in a whisper to the interrogations of Théodore, as from time to time he came from the deck to inquire if she still reposed.

It was long past midnight, and still the lady slept, while the old negress waved mechanically over her a plume of the gorgeous feathers of some tropical bird, the light wind, which the motion created, gently lifting the raven curls from her blue-veined temples.

“O, hi! dere massa captain,” she said, lifting her finger in the attitude of listening, as she heard Lafitte, after giving his orders to the helmsman, de-

scend to the cabin ; “ ol’ Juana hope he no harm de lady—he good man, sometime—and sometime he bad ! but he hab good heart at de bottom—ol’ Juana know he do mos’ much good as bad since she sail in de schooner ;” and the old negress continued habitually waving her plume over the sleeper, and musing upon the character of the buccaneer chief, when a deep groan from the adjoining cabin, where he leaned upon the table, disturbed her reflections.

“ Ah, dere Massa Lafitte in one ob his glooms,” she said to herself ; “ de lady no fear noting now. Tank de saint,” she continued, as she observed the maiden turn upon her side ; “ she stir—she wake up ; poor ting, how sorry she be when she hear her fader dead, and know where she be. If ol’ Juana be bad ’ooman, she no bad to dis pretty chil’, she hab no body to be kin’ to her now but ol’ Juana !” and the hideousness of the dark features of the old negress were redeemed for the moment, by the expression of kindness and pity which passed over them, as she thought of her helpless and lonely state. Besides her natural kindness of heart, retained in spite of her mode of life, there might have been some emotions of gratification, in having one of her own sex to relieve the dreary character of her rude existence.

The lady slightly moved, murmured indistinctly some name, while a sweet smile came for an instant to her lips ; and before its scarce perceptible reflection faded from her cheek, she raised her richly-fringed lids, and like one awaking from a pleasant dream, looked peacefully around. Surprised, she surveyed a scene of taste and elegance unfamiliar to her eyes.

The state-room was fitted up in a style of gorgeousness, to which the wealth of many rich argosies had contributed. The maiden herself reclined on an ottoman of crimson velvet, ornamenting one end of the cabin. An alcove on her right, contained

a marble laver, supported by the tips of the pinions of three bronze cupids, each holding in his extended hands silver vessels, containing various articles for the toilet. Over this stand was a mirror, set with a richly-chased frame of ebony, inlaid with pearl. The front of this recess was draped by curtains of blue and orange damask, which materials, entwined in festoons, encircled the state-room. Opposite to the alcove, under a costly swinging lamp, which cast a brilliant light through the room, stood an escritoire with a black marble top, supported by two leopards, also of marble, but so variegated as to imitate both in form and colour the spotted skin of those animals, nearly to the semblance of life. Upon it were strewn, of the costliest materials and most delicate workmanship, apparatus for writing; a superb guitar; a jewelled dagger, sheathed in a gold case; and a few Spanish and Italian poets, with one or two French and English authors of celebrity. An Alpine scene, done by a celebrated Florentine painter, set in an elaborately-carved frame, hung above it, while paintings of North American scenery adorned the other sides of the cabin.

Opposite to the sofa, occupied by the fair Castillian, stood, in a larger and deeper recess than the one containing the laver—a couch raised high from the floor, and fancifully shaped like a sea-shell, covered with the richest material of intermingled purple and white. A thick curtain of green velvet, now partly drawn aside, was made to fall before the recess and entirely covered it from the eye. Against this couch leaned an antique German harp, of uncommon size and beauty, curiously constructed of the blackest ebony, and adorned with carved ivory-work. The floor of this luxurious abode was covered with one of those thick Turkish carpets, whose yielding surface betrays no footstep.

The maiden gazed upon the splendour surrounding

her, at first with a wondering eye—pressed her fingers upon her eyelids, and looked again, and again.

“I must dream!”—said she in a low silvery voice, “Agata—O, Agata!” and she looked up into the face of her attendant—“what?—no!—I still dream,” she cried, placing her hand over her eyes, as though endeavouring to collect her thoughts—“Oh, Maria!—what a dream! what a fearful dream I have had!” and again she removed her hands, and gazed wildly round the room. She now heard distinctly the sound of rushing waters, and was conscious of motion.

“Father,—father! where am I?”—she shrieked wildly—“this vessel—the dashing waves! Hah! who is it that calls? Oh God! Oh God!—I know it all—all!”—she shrieked, as the deep mellow voice of Lafitte, addressing her from the inner cabin, fell upon her ear;—and the wretched girl buried her face in her hands, and shed burning tears.

“Señora, I would speak with you!”

“Ha! that voice again—miserable Constanza! utterly lost—lost!”—she exclaimed. Suddenly her eye rested upon the gemmed stiletto lying upon the escritoire.

“Holy Virgin, forgive me!—but thus I can save my honour!” and she sprung for the weapon.

“Bon Giu! Help, massa, help, she kill herself!” cried the terrified Juana.

The pirate threw open the door, but before he could enter, the unsheathed weapon was grasped in the elevated hand of the maiden; her eyes were uplifted, full of a sublime and holy devotion.

“Forgive me, blessed Virgin!” she uttered with wild and affecting energy, and the glittering dagger was descending into her breathing bosom, when her captor sprang forward, and the weapon was sheathed in his intervening arm.

“My life, lady, rather than thine!” he said, as he drew it forth.

"Oh, that it had been thy life!"—she exclaimed, while her beautiful and excited features expressed the intensest mortification at her disappointment; her dark eye kindled with anger, while her colourless lip showed maidenly apprehension. For a moment she stood in the attitude in which she had been arrested, with these several passions agitating her bosom; but the last overcame all other feelings, and with clasped fingers, and the uplifted eye of a Madonna, she said, imploringly and with touching eloquence.

"O, Señor, I am your captive—but ransom, a king's ransom shall be yours, only let me go in peace and honour. I implore you by your mother! by the blessed virgin! by your hope of heaven! by your fear of hell! See! I kneel to you! Oh, Señor, I know I am in your hands, but, as you hope for mercy, show mercy now!"

"Rise, lady—I swear!"—and Lafitte bared his brow, and kissed the cross-hilted dagger—"I swear by my hope of heaven, my fear of hell, by my sainted mother, and by the Holy Virgin, that you shall remain in all safety and honour!" The sincere voice in which he repeated her adjuration—the solemn eye, and devotional manner, re-assured the agitated girl.

"Oh, I would believe you, Señor, yet," she suddenly exclaimed, "my father! where, oh, where is he?" And, although the moment before, she had shrunk from the touch of her captor, as he extended his hand to raise her from her suppliant posture, while she kneeled before him, she now clasped him by the arm, and with a trembling voice, scarcely articulated—

"My—my—father!—Oh tell me—where?"

"Be calm, Señora.—You shall know all, but—"

"You have murdered him!" she shrieked.

"Nay, lady, he has not been murdered—he—"

"He lives not!" she cried, with terrible energy

in her voice, fixing her eyes upon his face, as if she would read in its changing expression what she sought, yet trembled to learn.

“Without violence, he died upon his bed.”

“Died!” she shrieked; but the next moment, with altered voice and manner, she murmured,

“Died?—died!—he then is dead—dead!”

Mournfully she spoke, and her fixed eye betrayed the temporary alienation of her reason.—“On his bed—too—and where was Constanza, to close his eyes? Dead! dead?—They tell me so—that my father is dead! and Constanza—living? Oh that she were dead also! How blessed it must be to die!—The good old man is happy now; he cannot see his daughter’s shame and misery. They tell me he died on his bed!—But they tell me false!” she cried, suddenly changing her abstracted manner, and low melancholy voice—“Oh, you have murdered him—” she wildly shrieked, while she pointed at the wounded arm of Lafitte—“there is blood upon your hand—my father’s blood—Murderer! murderer! Nay—*Lafitte!* LAFITTE! I can call you by no other name, that will so express my detestation, and your crime”—and the look which accompanied her words, was the more withering, from the extreme beauty of the features upon which it dwelt.

“Señora, I beseech you be appeased,” he said, with a tone indicative of wounded feeling. “Don Velasquez was not slain; he died naturally:—there was no hand laid upon his person. Calm your feelings. You think me guilty—I am, but not so guilty as you believe. If you will hear me a few moments”—he proceeded, as he saw she listened with some attention, and less excitement, to his words. “I will tell you all.”

The maiden remained silent—but slightly inclined her head, with the air of one who would listen.

"Hebérto Velasquez---" he continued, "you start!—guided my party to the vault containing your father's treasure, on condition, that he should share half the booty—while the whole weight of the act should fall upon me. You were alarmed, and, during the removal of the gold, your father, seizing a pistol, shot Velasquez, who was below with us, dead."

"Velasquez dead!—and by my father's hand?"

"Even so, señora."

"Then, Heaven is just!" she exclaimed.

"The alarm was given," he continued, "we were surrounded. I entered the room above"—here he bowed low, while a deep flush mantled his dark cheek, which was slightly reflected from the maiden's, who, with conflicting emotions, listened to the pirate's relation—"There, I first saw, you, never, lady, to forget you! I left your presence, and headed my men; but, pressed on every side, I was forced to retreat to the villa. I sprung into the room, and you fainted. The thought flashed upon me, that I could save my life, and gain my vessel, by protecting—pardon me, lady,—by protecting my body with your sacred person. I caught up your lifeless form, and, holding you before me, retreated, step by step, till I gained my vessel:—and, to this protection, lady, I owe my life!"—he added, with feeling.

"But, my father?"

"Worn out and feeble, during the tumult around him, he expired."

"Alas! he was ready to die!" she said, calmly, "I have long schooled my heart to part with him—but not thus—oh! not thus!" and, leaning her head upon the table, the lovely orphan gave way to her filial grief.

Lafitte left her to the indulgence of her sorrows,

and after delaying, in his own cabin, to attend to his slightly-wounded arm, ascended to the deck.

A faint tinge along the eastern horizon, announced the coming dawn—the night breeze had lulled—and the sails, at every lift of the vessel, upon some larger sea, flapped heavily against the masts. The watch were sitting, or standing, with their hands thrust into their bosoms, around the windlass—the officer of the deck paced his lonely round—the helmsman stood at the helm—and, like its master-spirit, directed the course of the yielding vessel, steadily towards the invisible point of her destination. The land had disappeared, save an irregular waving blue line along the horizon, which might be mistaken by the unpractised eye for the edges of a distant cloud, but in which, Lafitte recognized the fast disappearing mountains of Jamaica. All else was the broad heaving ocean, and the bending blue sky, in which, here and there, twinkled a solitary star, and the pale western moon, like a timid novice, modestly veiling her face, at the approach of the morning sun.

CHAPTER VI.

"There are few lovers who can bear, with philosophy, the rejection of their suit. But when, in spite of this rejection, the lover makes his unrequited love his guiding star in the path to honour and distinction, and, without hope, lives that he may be still worthy of his mistress, he is more than a philosopher—he has gained a victory over himself, and deserves, above the conqueror of armies, the admiration of mankind."

MORE.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN LAFITTE AND CONSTANZA—ITS RESULT—
A CHANGE IN HER DESTINY.

MORNING had advanced nearly into noon, when the commander of the schooner, who, wrapped in a cloak, had thrown himself upon the deck to refresh his weary frame, was aroused by a slight touch on his shoulder.

"The lady, sir!" said Théodore.

"What of her, Théodore?" he exclaimed, with a foreboding air, springing to his feet.

"She desires to speak with you, sir."

"Has she slept till now, Théodore?"

"No, sir, she has been all the morning weeping. She is now calmer, and desires an interview."

"Say to her, that her slightest wish shall be obeyed. I will attend her," he replied. And, turning to ascertain the position of his vessel, and the rate she had been running while he slept, he descended into the cabin, and delaying, for a few mo-

ments, to change his dress, marked with traces of the late battle, for one more befitting the presence of a lady, he tapped lightly at the door of her state-room, and was admitted by Juana into the presence of his fair captive.

Constanza had recovered her usual self-possession, and maidenly dignity of manner, though her cheek was pale, her lip tremulous, and her eye brilliant through tears. As he entered, she rose from the ottoman, struck with his fine figure, displayed to advantage by the rich dress he wore, and motioned him to a seat.

"Señora, I have obeyed your summons,"—he said, with deep respect.

"Nay, Señor, it becomes not the captive to issue commands; it is for her to obey! Señor," she added, with dignity, and yet with timidity, "I have solicited this interview with you, from my knowledge of your native generosity of character—however it may have been clouded and perverted by circumstances, which, I am willing to do you the justice to think, may have been beyond your control. Now that I have seen you, and know how nobly you can act, if you will be guided by the more generous impulses of your own bosom—I feel that I am not casting too much upon the success of this interview."

"Señora, you have only to speak to be obeyed," he replied, with much respect in his voice and manner. "All that I can do, shall be done, to atone for your injuries, and mitigate your grief."

"Most sincerely do I thank you, Señor—I have not, indeed, hoped too much!" Here she hesitated to proceed, and her manner betrayed embarrassment.

"Speak, lady! what can I do for you?"

"Give me my liberty, Señor!" she replied, firmly fixing her full dark eyes upon him, while her heart

palpitated, and her cheek paled, as she watched the effect of this demand upon her captor.

He had anticipated her request, and replied, unmoved—

“Where, lady, will you go?—Your father!—forgive me, that I inadvertently touched so sensitive a chord! But, lady, have you where to go?”

“Oh! no, no! but any where but here!” and she buried her face in the folds of the drapery.

“Señora,” said he, mournfully, and in a melancholy voice, “this is the bitterest moment of my life. That I am despised and proscribed of men, I care not! I can fling back their taunts: but, when so lovely a being turns from me with fear and detestation, then do I feel the galling of the outlaw’s chain! Lady!” he continued, suddenly changing his tone to one of deep earnestness, “it is said, there is pardon of the Holy Virgin for the greatest crimes: and will not one, who must so nearly resemble her in person and spirit, also forgive?”

“Oh, Señor, speak not blasphemously! You have all the forgiveness I can bestow. Would it could avail you hereafter! But oh, let me go hence, if, then, you hope to be forgiven.”

“Where will you go, Señora? *Why* will you go?” he said, with impassioned energy. “Here, you shall be sacred from intrusion. No footstep shall approach you unbidden. It shall be my whole duty to render you happy—but oh, desert me not!—You feel an interest in my welfare—then do not leave me. You are the angel that would guide me back to honour and virtue. I already feel the holy influence of her presence upon my heart. Leave me, lady; and with you, will depart, forever, these better aspirations. Again the dark spirit of my destiny, whose seat a purer spirit has assumed, will

usurp once more his empire ! Oh, leave me not to my own dark fate—extinguish not, forever, the only star of hope that has ever beamed upon my ill-fated bark ! Lady—stay ! behold me at your feet !” and the impassioned outlaw, who had spoken his feelings with that intenseness peculiar to his impulsive character, kneeled before the maiden.

“ Señor captain, kneel not to me,” she said, stepping back with dignity—“ Speak not to me, thus ! I cannot listen to language like this. I am your captive,—but” she continued more earnestly, “ oh, talk not to me thus. I would speak of my deliverance. If one so weak and simple as I am, can aught avail your return to society, cheerfully will I do all, that a free maiden, may do. Señor, my prayers, my influence, if I can command any, shall be yours—but—Oh ! use not to me such language ! I would go, Señor !” she added, quickly.

“ You, then, despise me,” he said, in a deeply-agitated voice ; “ You, then, despise me ! Just Heaven, strike home—I am thy victim ! Listen to me, lady,” he added, in a calmer voice. “ In youth, I loved a maiden much like you ; but my love met no return ; and for that passion I became an exile from my father’s halls. Love made me what I am—may it not open for me a bright and virtuous future ? Speak, lady ! and bid me live to virtue—to heaven, and to you !” and he gazed earnestly, his features beaming with the fervour of his passion, up into the face of the troubled girl as he kneeled before her. The maiden was deeply affected by his impassioned appeal.

“ Rise, Señor—I do not despise you—I deeply feel for you—but I cannot, must not listen to your language ! Yet you have strong claims to my regard, knowing you as I do. You have shown me a character, which, while the exhibition of it has surprised me, will ever command my esteem. I

must always honour the native nobility and generosity of your character ! fallen indeed, yet aspiring to the height from which you have fallen. Oh, sir, forget this hasty passion for a lonely maiden who cannot return it, and be the being, proud in conscious virtue, you seek to be ! Let your desire to return to the paths of honour, depend upon no contingency in which I am involved. Go forward, Señor, independently of extraneous circumstances, and make your own just perception of duty your guide, and you may yet be what you wish to be—what the world would desire to have you—what I sincerely pray you may become ! But think—think not of me—my affections”—and brow, cheek, and bosom were mantled with rich blood, as she added—“my heart—my love—is--another's !”

The chief still kneeled at the feet of the fair Castilian. The tones of her voice had long ceased, and yet he moved not. His features became deathly pale, his eye grew darker, and his lips were painfully compressed, while his chest heaved with strong emotion. For a moment he continued to kneel in a silence that appalled the heart of Constanza. Then slowly elevating his form, he stood up to the full height of his commanding figure, folded his arms upon his breast, and gazed upon her for an instant with a bitter and sad expression upon his features. But when, at last, with a great effort, he spoke, there was a calmness in the deep tones of his voice, which fell forebodingly upon her heart.

“Lady, it is well ! Ever thus has been my wayward and ill-directed destiny ! Forgive me, Señora, I will urge no more my fatal suit. I have loved you, Señora (nay, listen, lady, I may tell you now) I have loved you—how fervently, heaven and my own heart alone can tell ! But it has been a beautiful and happy dream. No more may I look upon you but as a distant worshipper upon the shrine of his

idolatry. A few short hours have changed me, lady !---For your sake, I will seek a name of honour among men ; and when hereafter you shall learn that Lafitte, the outlaw, earned laurels, and a name, and perchance a death, in honourable war—remember it was your love that guided his bark out of the gulf of crime—your love that wafted it on to honour. Then, lady, do justice to his memory !”

The rejected suitor, then, turning with much emotion in his manner, hastily quitted the state-room.

“ Sail, ho !” rung in his ears, as he entered his own cabin. Hastily concealing his gay apparel under a garment more befitting the deck of a piratical vessel, and the presence of his men, he ascended to the deck, and sought, in its bustle and activity, to forget the causes which agitated his bosom.

“ What do you make her out ?” he shouted to the man aloft, in a stern tone, that startled even his men, with whom his trumpet-like voice was well familiar.

“ A brig, sir—standing to the south-east, with her courses hauled up, and under top-gallant sails.”

“ Can you see her hull ?”

“ Not yet, sir ; but she rises rapidly.”

“ Lay down out of that, sir,” said Lafitte, impatiently ; and immediately he sprung forward with his glass, ascended the foremast, and standing on the cross-trees, closely surveyed the stranger. In a few minutes he descended, and ordered the helmsman to steer so as to gain the wind of her.

“ What do you make her out, sir ?” inquired his second in command, Ricardo, a swarthy Spaniard, with an unpleasing eye, but otherwise a good-humoured countenance, half shaded by a forest of black whiskers, who was smoking a segar, as he paced the leeward side of the deck.

“ A merchantman, bound probably into Kingston.”

"Ho, there—men!" shouted the lieutenant; "to your guns, and see that they are all prepared; and be ready, boarders."

"Aye, aye," cheerfully responded the crew; and there was at once a bustle of warlike preparation on board. The crew, which numbered the day previous about sixty, now cut down to forty, by the severe losses of the preceding night, engaged with alacrity in preparation for the expected fight.

"This preparation is useless, Ricardo," said Lafitte; "she will not resist us; and if she is bound for Kingston, I shall not injure her—and the lady below must be sent back in her."

"Cielos! without ransom, señor?"

"No—I give my share of last night's booty as her ransom. Does that serve your purpose?"

"Señor Captain, it does. I would give more for the glitter of a good Mexican dollar, than the sweetest smile that ever dwelt on pretty maiden's lip. Miraculo! Captain, you soon weary of this lady's favours."

"Silence, sir—the lady goes to Jamaica in yonder vessel, if it be bound there," replied Lafitte, sternly; and descending into the cabin, he once more sought the presence of his captive.

"Lady," he said, without entering her state-room, "there is a vessel now approaching, and if, as I think, it is bound for the island, you are free to depart in her. Where would you prefer making a landing?"

"At Kingston, Señor—I have an uncle there. I would land at Kingston! Oh, sir," she continued earnestly, and advancing towards him, "jest not with my hopes—am I indeed at liberty?"

"Lady, the uncaged bird is not freer than you shall be within the hour."

"May God bless you, generous sir!"

"Nay, I *dare* not keep you here," he replied;

I have not confidence in my own strength of purpose—I fear for you, remaining—absent, you are only safe; whilst I, who would wish to forget, must live only in dwelling on your image. Adieu---I will again wait on you when I ascertain the character and destination of the vessel.”

When he gained the deck, she was plainly visible about a league to leeward, under press of sail, evidently endeavouring to escape. She had hauled from her course several points since she first hove in sight, and now stood south before the wind, about a league distant.

“Shall we give chase, sir?” inquired the lieutenant.

“Aye, we must come up with her! put her away;” and the schooner falling off a little, with a freer wind, darted rapidly after the stranger, who was using every exertion to escape. But the buccaneer rapidly gained on her, and in about half an hour the chase was within the range and command of her guns.

Ten cannonades frowned along the pirate’s deck, and a gang of fierce and reckless men, some stripped to their waists, and armed with pistols, knives, and cutlasses, stood around each gun.

“Clear away that starboard gun amidships,” shouted the lieutenant.

“All clear, sir.”

“Pitch a shot then across her fore foot.”

The seaman stooped to the gun, and with his eye on a level with the piece, gave it the proper direction.

“All ready, sir.”

“Fire!”

The little vessel trembled and recoiled under the loud report of the gun, which had scarcely ceased ringing in the ears of the crew, who watched the ball as it ricocheted over the water, marking a line

of foam as it passed just across the bows of the vessel, when the brig threw her main-top-sail to the mast, hoisted American colours, and awaited the pleasure of the pirate.

"Lower and man the boat—go on board, Théodore, and ascertain what she is, and where bound," said the pirate, as the schooner approached nearly within hail of the stranger. The pirate lay to until the return of the boat—Lafitte the while leaning over the quarter, gazing in silence upon the vessel.

"Well 'Théodore'?" he inquired, as his messenger returned.

"She is an American brig from New Orleans, bound to Porto Rico, but will touch at Kingston, if there be gold to be made by it."

"Aye, gold---gold! well, they shall have it."

In a few minutes Constanza had changed the warlike vessel, and gorgeous cabin of the pirate, for the homelier accommodations of the peaceful and plain merchantman.

"Lady, adieu," he said, taking his leave on the deck of the brig; "you may soon forget me, but while my heart throbs with life, never can I forget Constanza Velasquez. That name shall be the talisman of a more honourable destiny---for I cannot be linked with guilt, bearing your image in my heart. Lady, farewell---Théodore will accompany you to your friends, and you will also have Juana, to wait upon you."

"God bless you, Señor---how deeply I feel my debt of gratitude to you---I shall ever remember you with friendship---may God and your country receive henceforth the duties you owe to each. Farewell, and the blessed Maria be your protector!" and she extended her hand to the chief as she spoke, who tenderly and ardently pressing it to his lips, sprang over the side into his boat. He waved his hand to

her distant figure, as he stood once more on the deck of his schooner, which immediately resumed her former course, while the merchant vessel, again making sail, stood steadily towards the port of her destination.

CHAPTER VII.

"No phenomenon of nature is invested with the sublimity of a tempest upon the ocean at midnight. The incessant thunder—the fierce lightnings—the continuous roar of the agitated waters—the driving clouds—the flashing sea—and the loud sound of the rushing winds—what sublime accompaniments! How little, then, in comparison, is man! And yet how great, as guided by his genius and intellect,—he fearfully commits himself to the deep, and on a few planks skilfully bound together, rides careering on the storm."

A STORM—ITS EFFECTS—A BUCCANEER—CHANGE OF DESTINATION.

THE sun went down that evening with an angry aspect---lurid clouds were piled around him, and the western skies wore that brassy hue, reflected upon the leaden waters, which, in those seas, is the precursor of a storm. The commander of the brigantine, which had now become the temporary abode of Constanza, was standing upon the quarter-deck, watching the huge masses of piled-up clouds, and threatening appearance of the heavens, with an anxious eye.

"Make all snug," he said, turning to his second in command, after a long survey of the brewing tempest. "We are likely to have a hard night of it---you had better send down the royal and top-gallant sails, and single reef the top-sails."

The necessary orders were given by the mate, and speedily executed by the active seamen; and the brig held on her course, steadily, under her lessened sail. The clouds rapidly rose in the west, and extended along the heavens, gradually unroll-

ing like a scroll, till the massive edge of the huge embankment hung, like a beetling crag above the vessel, casting a black shadow, over half the sea.

"Strike the top-gallant-masts, and close-reef the top-sails and stay-sail," shouted the captain, quickly, as the clouds came careering on, driving before the invisible, and yet unfelt tempest.

The night was fast setting in, though the red twilight, still lingered in the east---while along the western horizon, both sky and sea, were enveloped in terrific gloom. Suddenly the light breeze which had wafted them along, died away---and a fearful stillness dwelt in the warm air, while respiration became painful. The sailors stood at the several posts, where the coming danger might most require their presence---conversing in low tones with each other---now watching anxiously the gathering storm, which momentarily threatened to burst upon their helpless bark---or now, with an inquiring gaze, marking the face of their captain---a veteran seaman, with his head silvered by the storms of sixty winters.

He stood near the helmsman wrapped in a long drab pea-jacket, buttoned closely at his throat---a glazed hat, with a broad brim, upon his head, and a trumpet in his hand. His eye was full of care, but wore no expression betraying doubt, but rather a consciousness of being able to contend successfully, with whatever might occur---a consciousness originating in long and successful experience. His features were calm, and his voice full and natural, when, occasionally, he addressed his officers, or the helmsman.

Suddenly a flash of lightning shot along the face of the black bosom of the cloud, like a glittering serpent---and the air was rent with a report so loud, that every startled seaman placed his hands suddenly, and intensely to his temples. A tomb-like

silence succeeded, and the dark cloud unrolled, till it covered all the heavens, encircling the horizon in a fearful embrace.

"What, my lovely passenger!" said the captain, with gallantry, as the slight form of Constanza met his eye. "The thunder has alarmed you! shall I attend you to your state room?"

"No, oh no, Señor, the cabin is too close---It is but thunder, then! I thought it the firing of cannon! We are not pursued! Bless thee, Santa Maria," she continued mentally "I feared that dangerous man had changed his mind---I did him injustice. But oh, that I were safe beneath my uncle's roof! Is it far to Kingston, Señor?" she inquired.

"Twelve leagues, lady---if we safely weather this gale, we shall be there by morning."

"Thank you, sir, for such cheering words; but is there, as your words imply, danger? See! that light upon the sea! what is it?" she inquired eagerly, pointing to the west.

"Now we have it---stand ready, all!" he shouted, as a line of white foam, stretching along the horizon, caught his eye, as he looked up at her exclamation.

The vessel lay broadside to the path of the coming tempest, and so great was the calm, that the helmsman had no control over her. The captain, gave his several orders with professional rapidity, and energy.

"Hard-a-weather---hard-up, hard-up, for your life!" and he sprung to the helm, but the head of the brig remained immovable in the same direction.

"Good God! Head her off, or we shall be cap-sized! lady---below, below---youngster," he cried, to Théodore, "see to her!"

Every precaution was taken for the safety of the brig, that experienced seamanship could suggest: the

old man stood grasping the helm with a firm hand, while, with a calm, and unblenching eye, he watched the advancing hurricane. Onward it came—ploughing up the sea, which boiled, roaring and foaming before it—a moving wall of surge.

Constanza, with one hand grasping the companion-way, within which she stood, and the other resting upon the arm of her young attendant, gazed fearfully upon the visible presence of the tempest. Her bosom heaved irregularly—her cheek was pale, and her lips shut with expectation—but there was a sublimity in the scene which she loved, and which, chained her to the spot.

The lightnings flashed fast and fierce out from the black clouds, which seemed suspended close above their heads, and run like veins of gold along the heavens. The thunder came peal upon peal, like reports of artillery, rattling along the skies, and reverberating around the horizon, died away in the distance in low, indistinct mutterings. The glassy waves between the vessel and the rapidly careering tempest, began to heave, and while every man held in his breath with expectation, the brig rolled heavily, and within a few moments of the time when the distant moan of the tempest was first heard, with a loud roar, the storm of wind and wave burst upon the devoted vessel.

“Now—look to yourselves!” shouted the captain; and the wild waters leaped over the brig with the noise and body of a cataract—the furious winds twisted the light masts like withes—and the brig was borne bodily down by the irresistible force of the tempest, and lay prostrate upon her beam-ends.

The weather main-chains were wrenched like threads, with all their rigging, from the sides of the vessel; and the main-mast, bending like whalebone, broke off with a loud crack close to the deck. A wild cry mingled with the roar of the tempest, while

the live thunder leaped, and the lightnings glared about their vessel, as if in mockery of human suffering.

"Cut away the foremast---lively, men, lively!" cried the captain, clinging to the quarter-rail half emerged in the sea; and the mate, who was prepared for this emergency, run along the elevated side of the ship, and with an axe severed, one after another, the distended stays, which flew wildly into the air, lashing the sea as they fell. The remaining one parted with a sharp report before the axe descended, and the unsustained mast, which lay level with the water, after a few vigorous blows by the same daring hand, snapped off a few feet from the deck, and a large wave, lifting it up like a straw, bore it, with all its rigging, far away to leeward. Immediately the relieved vessel righted and floated amid the tumultuous ocean, an unmanageable wreck.

The moment the hurricane struck the side of the vessel, Théodore, holding firmly the arm of Constanza, drew hastily the slide of the companion-way, the doors of which were closed, over the place where she stood, and the waters swept harmlessly over her. But the violence of the shock would have thrown her down, had not the young buccaneer, with great presence of mind, rapidly adapted their position to the sudden inclination of the vessel. Alarmed, she stood with her crucifix clasped to her lips till the vessel righted, when, at her repeated request, Théodore drew back the slide to allow her to look forth upon the tempest.

What a scene of wild sublimity met her gaze! The heavens were pitchy black, over which the lightnings played in streams of fire---the thunder rolled continually in one prolonged and incessant reverberation---the sea was illuminated with phosphorescent light and raging with a loud roar, while

vast masses of water, rising from its bosom on every side, would swell into gigantic billows, and burst into a head of glittering foam.

The vessel, with her upper deck flooded, plunged heavily into the deep gulfs which yawned on every side, threatening to entomb her. The whole scene that met her eye was one of sublime, but fearful desolation. The old man, with his saturated grey locks streaming in the gale, stood at the helm, which he had seized when the brig righted---for the helmsman had been borne off into the sea, and his far-off wail for help had long before died in the more melancholy howlings of the storm.

"This is indeed fearful!" she exclaimed. "Poor, old man---he has lost perhaps his all---but his life is safe. Safe?" she repeated, despairingly; "Oh, who can say that one life is safe in this appalling scene!"

"Nay, lady, the bite of the storm is over---we only hear his growl," said the boy; "at any rate, it can harm this old hulk no more. We are not far from land, if it were but day we could see it. Cheer up, lady---there is no more to fear."

"I fear not, señor, for myself," she replied, calmly; "but that venerable man! he is perhaps a parent---it is for him, and for you, I feel---you have, perhaps, a mother and a fair sister, whose lives are wrapped up in you!"

"No, lady," he replied, sadly; "I am a parentless boy. There is none to call me brother. I can remember once loving, both a mother and sister, but they now sleep in the sea. Captain Lafitte found me a lonely and dying boy on such a wreck as this---he is all I have to care for me."

"And does he care for you?"

"Lady, he does. His is a stern nature, and wild deeds are familiar to him. Yet he has deep affections. Lady, he cares much for me! He imagines I resemble one---his brother, I believe, though he

seldom speaks of it---who met with some mischance in boyhood---for that resemblance also am I dear to him."

"Do you love him, boy?"

"Do you love your father, lady?"

"Oh, speak not of my father---alas, he too is dead!"

"Pardon me, Señora---but thus I love my benefactor."

The lady mused a moment upon the thoughts which her companion's answer had called up---the expiring gale sporting with her dark locks and mantilla, which floated like a white cloud around her head.

The lightning now became less frequent and intense---the thunder rumbled only along the distant horizon---the dark clouds, from whose bosom burst the storm, broke in huge masses, the thin edges of which grew lighter, while a spot of the deep, blue sky, in which sparkled a solitary star, could be seen at intervals between the driving masses. The waves grew less and less in size---breaking no longer like volcanoes bursting into flame, but regularly in snowy caps, or rolling onward, smooth, unbroken billows.

All at once, beneath an opening in a cloud in the east, the sea shone with a silvery light, and Constanza, who had watched the various phases of the storm, and the rapid changes of the scene, with a pleased and wondering eye, had scarcely exclaimed,

"Look, señor---how beautiful! what can pour that light down upon the sea?" when the breaking clouds, sailing before the receding gale, displayed the moon shining in unclouded brilliancy upon the heaving sea---glancing her welcome beams over the waves in a path of tremulous light, and falling like a smile from heaven upon the lonely wreck.

"Ha! what! a sail! God be thanked!" ex-

claimed the captain, as, after lashing the helm, he made one of the group at the companion-way.

"Look, young sir, with your keener eye---just in the moon's wake---no---it is the cap of a wave!"

"It is a sail, sir!" exclaimed the youth joyfully---"I saw distinctly the outline of a main-sail, and then it disappeared as though by the rolling of the vessel. There! the sails look black against the moonlight!"

"I see it, boy---you are right," answered the captain, in a lively tone; "she is within half a mile of us."

"The blessed Maria forbid that she should pass us by!" ejaculated Constanza.

"We will remedy that," said the old commander, cheerfully; and descending into the cabin, he returned with a large blunderbuss.

"This will make more noise than a trumpet," he said, cocking it; "but we will first wait and see if she does not come toward us."

"I saw her distinctly, sir," said Théodore, "while you were below, and she appears to be a large schooner lying to."

"We will hail her then," said the captain; and holding the blunderbuss high above his head, he pointed it in the direction of the vessel and fired. The report of the piece, to their ears, yet familiar with the roar of the tempest, sounded very faintly.

"I fear they will not hear it," he said, "it hardly seemed to go twice the length of the brig towards her."

The heart of the maiden sunk, and she involuntarily grasped the arm of the youthful sailor.--There was a moment of anxious suspense, when a light flashed upon their eyes from the stranger, and the heavy report of a large gun came booming across the water.

"Thank God! we are safe!" exclaimed the captain.--"She must be an armed vessel, from the free way she burns powder."

"She is making sail, sir," said Théodore, after gazing a minute intently at the vessel---she is a schooner---her masts and main-sail are now plainly visible; she has a main-top-mast stay-sail set, and carries top-sails---with jib and flying jib---She is now standing. No! do I see rightly? She is standing from us, sir!"

"She is, indeed---" hastily exclaimed the captain, in a disappointed tone---She must have mistaken our situation. We are so low in the water, she could not see us till close aboard of us. Show a light upon the stump of the mainmast!" he shouted.

Before the seaman he addressed reached the fore-castle, Théodore had sprung below, and returned to the deck with the swinging lamp, which hung in the cabin, and, raising it on the end of the blunderbuss, held it above his head.

In silence, and with heart-rending anxiety, they watched the success of their beacon, and, in a few minutes, an answering light from the stranger, filled their bosoms with delight. The vessel now tacked, and stood towards them, often appearing and disappearing from their eyes, as the dismasted brig rose upon some larger billow, or descended into some profounder cavern of the waves.

Their deliverer came towards them, with tall and stately motion---his sails rounded with the lulling breeze, and his prow flinging high the spray, as she bounded forward.

"I should know that vessel," said Théodore, quickly, as she came nearer.--Yes! it is sir!--" he said, turning to the captain--"that is a buccaneer!"

"Lady, dear lady!" he said, as a slight ex-

clamation escaped Constanza, "be not alarmed! I am surety for your safety. That is one of our squadron—I am known to the commander—he shall convey you in safety to Jamaica."

The maiden spoke not, but with clasped hands and tearful eyes, silently looked up to heaven, as if she looked for that protection there, which seemed denied her on earth.

"Wreck ahoy!—" shouted a stern voice from the schooner, which was now under the stern of the brig, showing four ports to a side, and from the numerous dark heads peering over the hammock-nettings, apparently full of men.

"Captain, your trumpet! allow me to reply. Your safety depends upon it!" said the youth, taking the instrument from his passive hands.

"Ho! the Julié!"

"Who the devil are you?" replied the first hailer.

"A prize of Lafitte's, bound into the rendezvous, and dismasted in the squall."

"Is that Théodore?"

"Even as you are Sebastiano! Send a boat for the prisoners; and, afterwards, take out the cargo. It is valuable."

"Be not so ready, my good youth, to bestow what belongs not to you—" said the old man, eagerly interposing.

"There is no alternative, sir; he must have all. And what avails it to you now, whether it go to the use of good Sebastiano, there, who is making such commendable haste with his boat—or, as must inevitably have been the case, to the bottom of the sea!—You must ask of Sebastiano no more than life. He will argue the point with you, and demonstrate to his, if not to your satisfaction, that he pays well for the cargo, by saving you from the dolphins."

The boat, riding over the huge seas, now balancing upon their summit, now disappearing in their hollow, at length reached the wreck, and a heavily-built man, who had passed into his third score of allotted years, stepped on to the deck of the brig.

"Oh, Théodore—Señor Théodore!" scarcely articulated the trembling maiden, clinging, with nervous apprehension, to his arm.

"Do not be alarmed, Señora," he replied, encouragingly, "I can manage this lump of bone and muscle, as I would a chained bear. Ha! my good Sebastiano!" he added, addressing him with much freedom, "I greet your jocund phiz with more of welcome than I ever dreamed I should do."

"By the twelve apostles! always including the worthy Judas," growled the buccaneer, in reply, casting his eyes over the wreck, "but you have made clean work of this. Sathan, himself, seemed to lend his bellows, and a spare hand, to help blow out the gale to night. The Julié once carried a holy father, and the devil could'nt hurt her, so we were safe. Santa Madre!--if it had been in broad noon, it would have blown out the suns eye--Cielos!--but who have we here?" he continued, raising his voice, on discovering the figure of the maiden, half-concealed behind the intervening person of the young buccaneer. Instinctively, the terrified Constanza withdrew herself from the rude gaze of the rover, and closely veiled her face.

"It is a lady," he said in his ear, "who goes on large ransom to Kingston:--She must be treated," he added, firmly, "with respect.--It is the express command of Lafitte."

"Señor Lafitte's commands are gospel to me—" he replied, with deference in his gruff tones. "Señora. Yo espero que su alteza veo en perfecta

salud—" he said, addressing the assured Constanza, and bowing with blunt respect in his manner.

"This vessel being in a sinking condition, Señora," he continued, "it has become necessary to remove you. In all things, captain Lafitte should be obeyed; but circumstances, as I can readily prove to you, often render obedience impossible, as for instance—"

"Come, Sebastiano, the lady will hear your conclusion on board the *Julié*. Is your boat ready?"

"All ready, Señorito Théodore."

"Ho!" he cried, "make room for the captain's lady to pass. He is to take to himself a wife, according to the command. Now it is good to marry hombres, first, because if this generation should not be given in marriage, the next---"

"Good Señor captain Sebastiano!" exclaimed Théodore, with some impatience.

"Well, well, Señorito Théodore, the boat is ready---in proof of which---"

"Hold hard, there, men!" cried Théodore---"jump in, sir," said he to the captain of the brig, who reluctantly obeyed. "Now allow me to fold this cloak about your form, Señora,---hold firmly to my arm---Juana, step into the boat, or you will be overboard---Now wait till the boat rises again---There! step firmly! Done like a seaman! Señora!" said Sebastiano, as he aided Théodore in handing her into the boat. "What a light foot for a royal boy!" he added aside to him.

"Shove off! Now give way!" he said aloud, with a professional brevity unnatural to him; and, in a few minutes, the party were safely landed on the deck of the schooner.

Constanza assured, from the respect shown her by the buccaneer, and the manifold influence of Théodore over him and his crew, that she had no

thing, at present, to apprehend, retired to a little state-room, to which he conducted her, and, wearied by the trying scenes through which she had passed, threw herself into one of the berths of the rude, but comfortable, cabin, and was soon buried in profound and peaceful sleep.

Théodore now took the pirate aside, and explained to him those facts which he did not choose to disclose before the crew, ever ready to mutiny on the slightest occasion.

"Now, Sebastiano," he said, after the most valuable freight had been removed to the schooner from the brig, which soon, with a plunge, disappeared beneath the surface, and the seamen, placed under the hatches, with some attention to their comfort, as released prisoners of a former capture by their captain, and sail once more made on the schooner, "Now, good Sebastiano, we must put into Kingston to-morrow. This lady must be landed, according to the terms of the ransom,---"

"Now, look you, my very worthy youth, whom, next to captain Lafitte, I hold in all respect---and for three reasons---"

"I will hear your reasons another time, Sebastiano---" replied the youth, quickly---"You must to Kingston to-morrow."

Here a discussion of some length took place, in which Sebastiano convinced his young friend, that, on account of certain recent notorious captures, in that vicinity, he would risk both his own, and the necks of his men, and his vessel, if he approached that port, as several armed cutters were already out in search of him. Such was the cogency of his arguments, that Théodore acquiesced; and immediately explained to the ill-fated maiden the necessity of adopting another course than that they originally intended to pursue.

The schooner, therefore, under the orders of captain Sebastiano, steered for one of the rendezvous of Lafitte's squadron, before alluded to, situated at the head of the bay of Gonzares, in the Island of St. Domingo.

CHAPTER VIII.

"PRINCE. Said you the noble duke was taken prisoner ?

MESSENGER. Yes your highness, and most strangely--Sword in hand, like a brave knight, he entered the breach at the head of his soldiers, and before ten of them could follow him, the wall above fell down and choked up the gap a score of feet in height—making a second wall.

PRINCE. And so he was caught with a mere handful of men within the beleagured city !

MESSENGER. It is too true your highness. "

A PIRATE'S DECK—A DUTCH BUCCANEER—CHASE—STORM
ENCOUNTER—A PRISONER.

THE French goëlette, or tender, which bore the fanciful name of *EULIONF*, having on board the commander of the French frigate "*Le Sultan*," after separating from the larger vessel on gaining the offing, sailed, as we have before mentioned, southward, in the direction of Carthagena—while the former steered easterly for St. Domingo.

The object of Count D'Oyley, in taking an opposite course to that of his frigate, was to make surer the chance of intercepting or overtaking the pirate whom he sought, and who, he supposed, had sailed for one of his two rendezvous in the West Indian seas—an uninhabited island near Carthagena, or the secluded bay on the west coast of St. Domingo.

With the speed of the wind the little vessel flew over the water, promising, by her unequalled velocity, soon to gain the advantage which the buccaneer had obtained by many hours precedence. The

bosom of the young Frenchman swelled, as, glancing over the side, he observed the rapid motion of his vessel flinging the spray to her tops, and leaving a long track of boiling foam astern. And his eye passing over the decks lighted with pride and pleasure, as it met the dark tiers of guns on either side,—the circles of muskets and boarding pikes around the masts—racks of cutlasses and pistols lining the quarter-rail—and upon the gallant band of seamen whom he had picked from his frigate for this expedition, on account of their experience, fearlessness, and fidelity.

Leaving the impatient lover on his pursuit of retributive justice, we will precede him to the shores of the Spanish main, toward which his vessel was rapidly borne.

Noon held her burning sceptre over the southern Carribbean sea, where our scene now opens, veiling the tremulous outline of the distant hills of St. Martha in a gauze-like haze, while the sun, in his high tropical altitude, was reflected with dazzling brilliancy in the glassy bosom of the waters.

There was not breath enough to toss a curl on a maiden's brow. The surface of the ocean was undimpled, and sleepily rolled its polished waves towards a coral reef, dotted here and there with clumps of low mangroves, upon which they broke with a sudden roar—sometimes leaping quite over them, and mingling with the calm waters of the lagoons, which stretched between them and the beach of the main land.

Beyond this reef, and nearly opposite to the St. Domingo gate, rising and falling upon the swells with a swan-like motion, a xebec, or three-masted schooner rode at anchor. Every spar and line of rigging was painted upon the water with the accuracy of reality. Each mast consisted of a single black stick, crossed obliquely by a long pliant yard,

upon which was brailed closely up a lateen sail suspended about half the altitude of the mast from the deck. The hull, which was about ninety feet long, was constructed with great breadth of beam, and flush from stem to stern. Like her spars it was painted black, with the exception of a narrow ribbon of red paint drawn around it just below the gunwale. From her unusual breadth amidships, the eye would be deceived in estimating her tonnage too large, but the extreme sharpness of her bows more than qualified this unusual width, and while it contradicted her apparent burden—promised unusual speed.

Two large boats were lashed in the centre, and a smaller one hung on each quarter. Directly amidships, and just before the mainmast, on a revolving carriage, was mounted a long gun, while in sockets sunk in the frame-work around it were several thirty-eight pound shot—a size proportioned to the vast calibre of the piece. Besides this frowning emblem of war—on either side of the vessel, and half run out of the ports, which were thrown open for free circulation of the air, were three cannon of different calibre and metal—two of them being cast out of brass and originally intended for heavy field artillery, the others of iron, carrying eighteen and twenty-four pound shot. The arms of Spain were impressed on one, while the crown of Great Britain and the eagle of the United States, were stamped in bold relief upon the remainder.

The gun carriages were constructed of heavy live oak, stained red, and rigged with chains and cordage to keep them in their places. Bags and hammocks were stowed away in the nettings in the bulwarks, which were the height of a man's head and impervious to musket balls. A forecastle, main-hatchway and companion-way were the only passages of communication between the main-deck and

lower. Around the first were congregated, under a canvass awning, spread from side to side of the vessel, about a score of men, in whose harsh and varied countenances a physiognomist might recognize individuals of many nations. Although the dark hair, gleaming eye, and full red lip of the Spaniard, the swarthy cheek and inferior face of the Portuguese showed what countries they most numerous represented.

Some of these were enjoying a *siesta* after their rude meal, which they had just shared together—others were reclining in various easy and indolent postures upon the deck, with segars between their lips, laughing and jesting or playing tricks upon their sleeping fellows. One was kneeling near the windlass, muttering in a low tone, and lazily fingering a string of black glass beads, held in his hands, while one or two, with folded arms, paced moodily and silently the little clean space under the awning not occupied by their shipmates.

These men were dressed nearly alike, in blue, checked, cotton, or canvass trowsers, bound round their waists by a red, blue, or white sash—and without shoes or stockings. Conical caps, of various colours, in which red and blue predominated, were worn upon their heads—lying beside them on the deck, or thrust into their bosoms. Some of them wore woollen shirts of the same colour of their caps, with the sleeves rolled up, and fastened at the neck with gold and silver buttons, or else thrown back over their shoulders exposing broad shoulders and Herculean chests. Every man was armed with a long double-edged knife with a broad blade, stuck without a sheath in his girdle, upon the haft of which, as they slept, walked or conversed, their hands mechanically rested. For, in a community like theirs, where a hasty word is spoken at the price of the blood of the speaker, it became neces-

sary that each one should bear upon his person, at all times the means of defence and offence.

Heavier weapons, in the shape of cutlasses and pikes, stood around the masts, and in other convenient places, ready for their grasp in the moment of battle.

Under another awning, spread over the larboard gang-way, and shading the space occupied by two of the guns, was assembled another and larger group, whose dress and mode of passing the sultry hours of mid-day were similar.

On the opposite side of the deck, without the shade, and in the sun, lay a negro upon his back, with a grotesque expression upon his ungainly features, playing with a monkey, which he held struggling in the air, and who had been curtailed of his natural and most ornamental appendage, whilst, undoubtedly for the preservation of symmetry, his ears had been shorn after the same fashion.

Half a dozen boys, white, black and yellow, whose heads displayed all the varieties of caroty, woolly, and strait black hair, were gathered about him, their coal black eyes sparkling with glee. Each of these neophytes to the trade of buccaneering, was naked to the waist, from which depended an apron, or a pair of loose trowsers, (abridged,) from dimensions adapted to men of much larger growth. Small, sheathed knives, which were stuck in the belt, or string confining their lower and only teguments, were oftener in use for malice or mischief, than the broader blades of the men.

One of these youths, whose robes would have required much enlargement to rival the primitive fig leaf—was occupied in pricking, by way of practice in his profession, the hams of the suspended monkey; and delighting himself, and his part-coloured companions, in the contortions and yells of the animal.

Farther aft, was spread an awning, whose scoloped edges, bound with some bright-red material, indicated due consciousness of that superiority which appertains either to the quarter-deck of a ship of the line, or a pirate-schooner. Beneath this gay awning reclined various individuals, whose rank on board the schooner entitled them to protection from the sun farther astern, than the other less-favoured occupants of the vessel.

From the stays, which on either side supported the after or mizen-mast, was stretched, about three feet from the deck, a hammock of net-work, in which lay a heavily-framed man, whose breadth of shoulders indicated great physical power, while the rotundity of his short person betrayed the bon-vivant. His head was large, and covered with red, bushy hair; his complexion, naturally fair, was now changed to a jocund red; his eyes, small, deep set, and gray—his forehead fleshy, and his cheeks full, and hanging; while the lower portion of his face, drooped into that second, and pleasing fulness, which bears the appellation of "double-chin." A pair of white jean trowsers, enveloped his rotund, lower limbs—while a loose gingham coat, was wrapped partially around his body. His height, or rather length, as he lay in the open hammock, appeared less than five feet, and judging from the lines of years which graced his visage, and an occasional tuft of gray hair, interspersed in the burning bush, which covered his phrenological organs, his age might have been a little above forty-five or six.

At the time we introduce him to the reader, he was lying with his face upwards, and one leg hanging out of the hammock, smoking a long fantastic German pipe, and idly watching the little blue clouds, as they circled above his head, rolled along beneath the awning, and floated astern, into the

outward air. A half-naked African waved over him a large fan, made of the variegated feathers of some gorgeous Mexican bird—whom he would occasionally take his pipe from his mouth to, curse, for roughly blowing some more beautiful wreath, which had won his eye---breaking into a host of flickering clouds. The slave's skill, seemed to consist in cooling the atmosphere around the head of the smoker, without agitating the spiral wreaths which were satisfactorily, and at regular intervals, emitted from his large, vermillion lips.

On the deck, nearly under the hammock, reposed two other figures, whose dress, and arms, which they constantly wore, in connection with their presence on the quarter-deck, indicated them to be officers. A fourth figure, with dark and handsome features, rendered unpleasing by an habitual, sinister expression, with a form slender and athletic, calling to mind one of the *athletæ* of ancient Greece---with flowing white trowsers and loose gingham frock, confined to his waist by a yellow silk sash---which also secured pistols and a cutlass---leaned in an easy attitude against the binnacle, his muscular arms bared to the shoulder, and folded over his breast, while the smoke of a segar curled unheeded over his head. His eyes were habitually fixed upon the northern horizon, visible between the awning and the quarter rail, but without that consciousness which indicated attention to any particular object. All at once, they lighted up, and dilated, while his brow was lowered over them, as though to shade, and strengthen his vision---and with his head and body advanced, he looked long and steadily, towards one point of the horizon.

"Vat dat you shee, maat," slowly interrogated the corpulent personage in the hammock, as his eye, by chance, detected the change in the attitude, and manner of his officer. "No saail, mine Got---heh!"

"A sail, I believe it is, captain---my glass here, you black imps---jump!" he cried, and the troop of urchins, leaving the monkey in the midst of his martyrdom, sprung for the companion-way, but were distanced by the *sans-culotte*, who the next moment placed the spy-glass in the hands of the officer.

"A schooner, with a gaft top-sail, and top-gallant mast---I can just see the peak of her main-sail!" he said, after looking a moment through the instrument.

"Heh ! dat shall pe Mynheer, captain Lafitte---to pe shure ! shee if dere pe royals ?"

"She has none set---I can't well make out her spars at this distance---but she brings a breeze with her, whoever she be ! her upper sails belly out like ---," and looked round at the corporeal curvature of his captain for an illustration, with a sly smile of Castillian humour.

"None of dat, Mynheer Martinez, you are put a strait spar---vereeas I'sh am always under full top-shails,---to pe shure. Tam dish hot climate---if haal don't lay under dish tam Carribbean shee---den I'sh neber ecshpect to shee it---it melts a maan down, like trying out fat in de cook's kettlesh. Hugh, hugh, hugh ! it takes mine breat from out de body when I'sh open mine mout, dis so tamn hot"—Puff, puff !---"Dere ! dat wash a purty curl, wid de ring in de middle like de shmoke from de mout of de cannonsh," he exclaimed. Turning growlingly to the slave, "Curse you, plack nigger, vat sall mak' you plow in dis deble sortish style—I'll toss you ofer-poard to mak' de breesh be coming—to pe shure."

"I make her out now, distinctly," said the first officer---"she is a schooner of about seventy tons, with fore-top-sail, and top-gallant-sail set. Caramba ! she is walking down this way with a bone in her teeth."

"Ho! there forward---stand by to get under weigh, the breeze we have so long been wishing for is coming upon us now, with a light heel---and moreover, we are likly to have a breeze of long shot, by the saucy looks of this stranger," he added, as before one of those sudden and strong winds, peculiar to that climate, after a lengthened calm, the vessel rapidly approached, showing a tier of ports on her starboard side, which was next to them, out of which the heads of five or six guns bristled, with a very warlike air.

"Hah! vat ish dat you shays, maat," exclaimed the captain, with some quickness; "hol' dish hammock tort, you Congee nigger, vilst I gets out---Dere! vas dere ever such tamn hot vedersh---dish teck is like de oven vat baked Shadrach, and his brod'ren. Hugh!" and the portly commander of the schooner standing upon his legs, after many ponderous sighs, and irrelevant ejaculations, took the glass from his mate, and looked steadily at the advancing vessel.

"Mine Got, it ish true---he vill be carry ten kuns in hish teck---to pe shure, and full of mansh,"---he said, with energy, as the schooner now within two miles of them, hauled her wind and stood towards Carthagena, seen indistinctly in the distance through the heated atmosphere, which danced with a tremulous, wavy motion over every object. With its silvery beach---battlements groaning with cannon, its heavy towers, convents, and monasteries, and surrounding eminences, strongly fortified, with their sides dotted with picturesque villas, the city with its surburbs, slept beneath the glowing noon, in the silence of midnight.

The breeze now ruffled the surface of the water around their vessel, breaking it into myriads of little waves, which emulously leaped into the air, as though to welcome its approach.

"Man the capstan; heave up the anchor!" shouted the mate, sternly---and every sleeper sprung to his feet, and every idler and jester became at once active and serious.

The capstan soon flew merrily round, and at the brails and halyards of the lateen sails, ready to obey the orders of their officer, stood various parties of the crew.

"Show the trading lugger,"---he added, and the guns were hastily drawn in, and the ports closed, so as to present a plain broad side to the stranger.

The anchor was soon hanging from the bows---the triangular sails of each mast spread to the breeze---the jib, which extended along the short bowsprit, was hoisted, and the vessel bending low before the wind, moved through the water with increasing velocity.

"Shall we try him captain?" said the mate, coolly, retiring to the quarter deck, after getting sail on the schooner.

"Dry---vivty tyfils! Tamn! noting else sall be got peside, from dish chap, put iron piscuit in te pread pasket---to be shure," said he sympathizingly, laying a hand upon that important portion of his body---"tyfil a pit sall ve dry him, Martinez."

"Then, now we are under weigh, shall we steer for Gonares?" he inquired.

"Yes, Mynheer Martinez---de hatches are as full as an English-mansh"--

"Or a Dutchman's Captain!" interrupted Martinez, with a wink to his junior in command.

"Letsh me shpeak Martinez," grumbled the captain good-humouredly. "or a Tutchmansh after Chrishmash tinner---dere is no more room for de more cargoes---if we take more prishes---Put de helm up for Gonaresh!"--

Obedient to the braces the sails swung round until they lay nearly parallel with the length of the ves-

sel and close-hauled on the wind, lying down to leeward, so that her gunwales dipped deep in the water. the vessel left the shores of Carthagena behind her, and stood for St. Domingo.

She had sailed on this course but a short time, when the stranger, who was standing in the opposite direction, also changed his course hauling close on the wind and running so as to intercept the buccaneer.

"Martinez, dish looksh shqually—one, two, drie, vive guns on hish shide." said the captain as he observed this measure, "he ish a cruiser---ve musht fight or show him our heelsh, and vy sall ve fight, ven dere ish no purpose---ve can take no more coods---put he vill, may pe, take ush---to pe shure! It petter not pe fightings---Heh! Martinez"---

"As you say sir---I suspect he is in chase of our vessel---we can hardly cope with him. Set the gaff topsails, and hoist away the spencer," he shouted;—and this last sail, with three small triangular sails stretched from the topmasts, which were of one piece with the lower masts, now spread to the wind, gave additional speed to the vessel. Groaning and straining through every joint, she parted the green waves before her, flinging them around her bows, and promising to distance the other vessel, which having the wind on the pirate, now rapidly neared him.

It now became the object of the pirate to escape from the armed vessel, which was evidently trying to cut him off---to this end all his energies were now directed. The vessels were rapidly approaching the same point, which, once passed, the pirate felt there was a chance of his escape.

As he was giving various orders to increase the speed of the vessel by securing the guns, or changing their position; and tightening the braces, the stranger suddenly run up the French flag, and a

puff of smoke from the side of his vessel was immediately followed by the report of a cannon, and the skipping of a round shot across their wake, within a few fathoms of the stern---

"Heh ! vivty tyfils ! he shpeaks mit de iron trumpet---Martinez," continued the captain with an energy unlooked for in a man of his corporature---"ve musht lame him---or dis nicht de tolfhins vill eat a goot supper, from the potty of Mynheer Jacob Getzendauner---to pe shure !"

"Clear the starboard guns and double shot them---stand ready to give him a broadside---Here Jacobo, Andrea, Manuel ! where are your ears ? level that long gun and let him have it from stem to stern as we cross his bows, make a clean sweep through him !---now stand ready all !"---shouted the young Spaniard to whom his captain seemed to have resigned the more active duties of command ; and springing upon the hammock nettings, he watched with a deliberate eye the motions of the approaching vessel.

The pirate was standing nearly due north, close hauled upon the wind, which was from the north-west, and running at the rate of about eight knots, while the French schooner was standing nearly in a south-western course, also close-hauled with every thing drawing endeavouring to keep to the windward of the pirate, who was using every effort to prevent the success of this nautical manœuvre. They were within less than half a mile of each other when the mate sprung upon the quarter-rail to watch the favourable moment to disable his opponent.---The faces of the men and officers in uniform upon the decks of the strange schooner were easily discernable by him---and he observed that on board of her every preparation was made for action.

"Can we cross her fore-foot,---sir ? said he, turning

to his captain, who stood by with a face expressive of some anxiety but more resolution---

"No---no Martinez---tish an impossible---if ve letsh him go acrosh our cutvater he vill sink ush, to pe shure---"

"Shall we give it to him?" inquired the Spaniard, "it is our only chance!"

"Aye---hoisht away de crosh and het, and tunder mit de kuns."

At his command a black flag, upon which was painted a red cross, surmounted by a Death's head, fluttered at the mast-head.

"Now fling open the ports---well aim each gun, let go sheets and braces all!" he shouted, as the Frenchman began to show his weather ports---now she rights, give it to him---fire!" One after another, in rapid succession, the guns of the star-board broadside were fired at the schooner, and the pirate had the satisfaction of witnessing her fore-topmast fall over the side, cut in two by a shot. The wounded vessel yawned and fell off from the wind, whilst the pirate crew shouted like demons at their success.

"Well done my men!---braces all-hard-a-weather!" cried the mate, cheerfully.

Once more under steerage-way, the buccaneer shot ahead and to windward of the chase, who, wearing round, gave her a broadside which tore up her fore-castle deck, killing two men, breaking an arm of one of the young apprentices before introduced to the reader---and slightly injuring the bowsprit.

The pirate now moved over the water with rapidity, leaving his wounded pursuer far astern, though still slowly in chase. With his glass he could detect the men aloft repairing the rigging, and setting the topmast while every other spar and

sail that could be made available was brought into use.

Night found the vessels more than a league apart, their repairs, completed, steering the same course, and still the pursuing and pursued. The wind, after the sun went down, gradually increased, and at midnight a storm lashed the waters into foam. The vessels were separated from each other in the darkness, and their crews were engaged until day-break in a battle with elements, instead of each other. As the morning broke the gale abated, and by the increased light the pirate saw his opponent lying to within a third of a mile of him to windward.

"All hands to make sail," he shouted, but the stranger had already discovered him, and was spreading his canvass, and bearing down upon him.

"Now we must fight captain!" he said to his superior officer, who had just come to the deck--"we have no chance of using our guns in this sea---Dios y St. Jago," he hastily exclaimed, "they are preparing to board us---Ho! there boarders, all!---repel boarders!"---he shouted.

Cutlasses and boarding pikes were rapidly passed from hand to hand along the decks---the men stripped to their trowsers, placed their pistols in their belts---and in three divisions at the bows, stern and midships, headed by the captain; Martinez and an inferior officer, they stood sullenly and resolutely to receive their foe---The sea was rolling in large waves, over which the armed stranger rode lightly, as he advanced to engage with the pirate. The vessels were now within hail of each other.

"Ho, the schooner, ahoy!" was borne across the water upon the wind, and distinctly heard above the

surging of the sea---“Strike your flag or no quarter !”

“A Carthaginian cruiser !” replied Martinez, as the flag of that state was displayed at the peak.

“What is that he says,” inquired Count D’Oyley, who had hailed, to his young companion Montville, who stood by his side---“a cruiser ! a pirate, as his well-shotted guns told us but last night.---Boarders be ready---I may find here what I wish,” he added to himself,” or a guide to the present rendezvous of their chief---Lay her alongside !” he cried, as the vessel came close to the pirate---“now grapple !”---he shouted, in a loud energetic voice---and the vessels came together with a dangerous shock.

Drawing his sword he waved it over his head, shouting “Allons mes braves !” and bounding over the bulwarks, he leaped with one bound upon the deck of the pirate, followed by Montville.---Before his men could equal his rapid movements, the pirate’s crew had discharged their guns on the side next to the schooner, the recoil from which, and the simultaneous shock of a huge wave, breaking upon her stern, parted the two vessels with violence, and a succeeding wave swelling to a vast height bore them at a great distance apart.---The count was engaged immediately hand to hand with the Spaniard---while young Montville, was saved from being run through the body in a dozen places, by the interference of the captain, who disarmed him by a blow of his cutlass, and grasping him, thrust him down the companion-way into the cabin.

“Vasht dere, mine mensh !” he cried to the crew, who were rushing upon the French officer ; “vasht dere---let Martinez here have dis pretty pit o’ fight to himself. A good poy is Martinez---let him fight---to pe shure !” and while he spoke, the sword and cutlass of the combatants rung as they interchanged fierce and rapid blows.

"Hold!--are you Lafitte?" cried Count D'Oyley, parrying the weapon of his antagonist.

"Yes, señor, I am Lafitte---if it please you!" replied Martinez, eagerly, after an instant's hesitancy.

"Have at you, then---to the death!" cried the count, raining the blows upon him with a skill and energy which it required all his activity and presence of mind to parry. The fight was long and desperate---the eyes of the Spaniard flashed with a snake-like brightness, while the countenance of the Frenchman glowed with fierce and determined energy. Three times had his sword passed through the arm of the Spaniard, who, with a chivalry worthy of a nobler cause, was willing to lose his life as the personater of Lafitte, rather than confess himself a less notable antagonist. Once had his weapon gashed the breast of the Frenchman, when the captain, who had with difficulty restrained the buccaneers from rushing aft and cutting down the stranger, knocked up their weapons.

"Dis vill pe petter stopped, Martinez---dish ish mine prishoner---he vill mak de ranshom monish. I vill tak your sword, Mynheer."

The count, wounded, and weak from loss of blood, surrendered it, and at the command of the captain, was conducted by two of the crew into the cabin.

The mate, hastily staunching the blood from his slight wounds, looked over the side and saw the enemy at a distance, with her rudder shot away, tossed about at the mercy of the waves, and wholly incapable of renewing the contest. He then gave orders to make all sail for the rendezvous---and in a few minutes the schooner stood on her former course, under pressure of all her canvass.

CHAPTER IX.

"Our plans are often thwarted by the means we make use of to insure success. This is frequently independent of all our manoeuvring, and befriends us when circumstances seem most adverse."

EDWARDS.

PIRATE'S RENDEZVOUS—CAPTIVES—STANZAS—SCENE IN A GROTTO.

THE scenery of the north-eastern portion of the Gulf is varied by immense gorges, flanked by precipitous cliffs, indented with caverns, many of which are of great extent, sometimes penetrating into the bosom of the rocky ridges several hundred feet. The Cibao mountains, an elevated range, commencing near Cape Espada, terminate at Cape St. Nicolas, on the extremity of the most northern of the two western tongues of the island. At this point the main spine of the mountain separates into several precipitous promontories, one or two of which end abruptly at the sea-shore, over which they form precipices many hundred feet in height.

These cliffs share the peculiar features of the wild scenery of this region, and caverns, and rocky ravines, nearly enclosed above, are excavated by the hand of nature, or some convulsion of her empire, in great numbers along their bases. The loftiest of these Alpine branches, after running out an isolated mural precipice into the sea, for more than half a league,

ends in a bluff about three hundred feet in height, the edge of which, covered with rich woods, juts several yards out over the perpendicular face, like a stupendous roof. Beneath, the water was very deep and clear, displaying, to one looking down from the cave, thousands of many-coloured sea shells.

About twenty feet above the surface of the water, the face of the rock receded, leaving a terrace, against which a vessel might lie so closely, that one could step from it on to her yards. This terrace was about thirty feet broad, and upon it frowned a heavy gun placed on a carriage. Beyond it opened the mouth of a vast cavern, which, with many sinuosities, penetrated far into the base of the cliff. The entrance was irregularly formed, in shape somewhat resembling a gothic gateway, though of gigantic dimensions. In front of this entrance spread the broad gulf of Gonares, which flowed unbroken to within about half a mile of the cavern, where it met, with a loud roar, two nearly parallel ridges of high rocks, extending from the base of the cliff, leaving a narrow, deep passage from the sea for small vessels, quite to the foot of the rock, or vestibule of the grotto beneath, in front of which, widening into a small basin, it formed a safe and convenient shelter.

This cavern had long been used by the buccaneers as a general rendezvous---a repository for their treasures, and a prison for those captives whom they detained for the purpose of drawing ransom for their liberation. Here also they resorted to repair their vessels, and to receive the instructions of Lafitte, who made this rendezvous of his fleet only second to that of Barritaria. To this scene we now transport our readers---about a week after the expedition against the villa of Señor Velasquez.

The principal apartment of this grotto consisted of an interior chamber, illuminated by a solitary

lamp, burning in a projecting shelf of the cave. It was about forty feet in diameter, and nearly circular, rising into a lofty dome, from the nave of which hung a stalactic mass of open work, resembling a huge chandelier---as it reflected in numerous brilliant points the rays of the little lamp beneath.

Crystalized icicles, and innumerable fanciful stalactic creations, hung around the chamber---pilasters of the same beautiful material, terminating in half-formed arches, stood out in fine relief from the dark sides, united by delicate lattice-tracery. The dome itself was carved, with the accuracy of architecture into the richest fret-work. Shaded niches were half concealed by exquisitely arranged folds of thin plates of stalactite. The roof was open to the blue sky, through which one or two trembling stars could be seen glancing among the waving foliage. . Vast rocks lay upon the floor of the room, fallen, apparently, from deep niches in the sides and ceiling, while regular forms, like statues, pedestals, and columns, either stood, or were strewn about the chamber. At the extremity of the cave, a small, glittering cascade of water gushed from a crevice in the side, and with a monotonous sound, rung upon the rocky pavement beneath, and after flowing over it, like running glass, for a few feet, disappeared in a deep pit opened in a recess of the cave, and could be heard, after long intervals, reverberating in the vast depths, as it leaped from shelf to shelf, till the sound was lost in the bowels of the earth.

One side of the cave was covered by fantastic stalactic drapery, which fell in a broad sheet to the floor.

The only entrance to the cavern, before which paced a sailor-sentinel, was narrow, and lighted near the outside by a lamp, which had once hung in a ship's cabin, suspended from the low ceiling. From this passage branched others, for a short distance,

terminating sometimes in small rooms, at others in deep pits and mere crevices in the rock. Many of these branches, or lesser caverns, contained chests, tables, chairs, arms, and garments, strewn about---hammocks, cooking utensils, and other indications of being occasionally occupied. Naval and military weapons, with a few articles of ship furniture, were scattered about the room, and bales of goods were piled in recesses around the cavern.

In one of these recesses, terminated by a stalactic sheet, almost transparent, dropped from the low roof to the rocky pavement, and forming one side of the niche, was spread a strip of rich carpet, strewn with bamboo leaves, upon which reclined a figure, half obscured in the gloom of the deeply-shaded vault, buried in sound, but feverish sleep. His head was uncovered, displaying a profusion of chesnut hair; his brow was pale, and his eyelids and temples were transparent from illness. His form was partly wrapped in a dark blue cloak, upon the folds of which rested his left arm, bandaged as though to protect a wound. The rays of the lamp in the larger chamber, half interrupted by the projecting sides of the niche, fell obliquely across the upper part of his face, leaving the lower portion in deep shadow. A broken sabre and a shattered pistol lay near him, the relics of a recent fierce conflict between the prisoner, for such he was, and the young Spaniard Martinez, his captor, in attempting to escape from the cave.

There was a deep silence in the cave, uninterrupted save by the breathing of the sleeper, which was irregular, and occasionally the low rumbling of the distant surf, reverberating along the passages, and nearly lost before it came moaningly into the inner chamber of the grotto.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a low voice, apparently from some concealed recess, singing a

plaintive air. The words were Castillian, and flowed from the lips of the invisible singer with melancholy cadence.

I.

The virgin moon, with timid hand,
Unmoors her silver boat ;
And inexperience'd to command,
Loves near the earth to float.

II.

Each night, she tries the gentle gale,
And plies her silvery oar ;—
Each night she spreads a broader sail,
And further leaves the shore.

III.

How boldly through the azure sea
Her little bark she guides !
Before the gentle breeze, how free
And gallantly she rides !

IV.

Now half her heavenly journey through,
Each sail is flung amain !
The prize she seeks through heaven blue,
Is found—to lose again.

V.

And steering gently for the shore,
Where first she sought the gale,
With hand as timid as before,
She furls her snowy sail.

VI.

Thus Hope unmoors her fragile boat,
And boldly tempts the main ;
Winning the daring height she sought,
To fall to earth again.

VII.

So Love, yet bolder, leaves the shore,
And fearless sails the sea ;
With flowing sheet and plying oar,
He courses gallantly.

VIII.

Bravely he bears him for the prize,
Nor sooner is it won,
Than, as the moon wanes in the skies,
Love, love, alas, is gone !

The voice was soft and silvery in its tones, yet the sleeper, like one on whom a finger is lightly

laid, started and opened his eyes as the first notes fell upon his ear, and gazed wonderingly around him, as if spell-bound, until the last tremulous notes ceased, and silence reigned again throughout the solemn vault.

"Do I dream—that voice!—it is hushed!—I must be dreaming!" he exclaimed, starting with energy and strength from his couch, and gazing wildly around him "Ah! it was but a sweet dream---this cave! this wounded arm---alas! I am a prisoner! Kind heaven, I thank thee for this happy dream!" he exclaimed, fervently. "And is it indeed a dream?---may not her released spirit have been hovering over me in my sleep, and soothing my burning slumbers with that air I loved to hear her sing on earth. Oh, blessed spirit!" he fervently cried, under the influence of his fevered imagination, dropping upon his knee, "if thou art indeed near me, bless me with that angelic melody. Sweet Constanza! if I may not see thee, let me hear thy voice once more!"

"Who calls upon the name of Constanza?" fell upon his ear, in the liquid and melancholy accents of the song.

"Mon Dieu! it is---it is she!" he exclaimed; identity of circumstances, and places, and recollection of the causes which brought him there, suddenly returning. "It is---it is she---Constanza! Constanza! speak! are you there?" he cried, turning to the side of the niche from which the voice proceeded, and placing his lips to the thin stalactic wall. "It is D'Oyley that addresses you!"

"Alphonse!--my own Alphonse!" she exclaimed, her voice trembling between hope and fear; "can it be you?---no! no! Alphonse is far, far away, and knows not the fate of his poor Constanza!"

"God of heaven! it is indeed Constanza!" ex-

claimed the count, assured. "Dear Constanza, I have come to release you---it is your own Alphonse ! and no other ! Is there no way of getting to you ?" he cried, suddenly endowed with almost supernatural strength, at the same time eagerly seeking some mode of ingress to that part of the cavern where she was evidently imprisoned. There was no reply from within to his anxious inquiry.

"Tell me, Constanza," he continued, raising his voice ; "Do you know the passage that leads from without to your apartment ? Direct me, and I will pass out---master my guard---enter, and rescue you ! Speak---dear Constanza !" he earnestly added ; but the echoes of his own voice through the hollow cavern, only replied to his eager words.

'She must have fainted. or---Heaven be blessed ! here is a passage !' he added, with delight, as his eye glanced from the stalactic drapery separating the vaults, to a heavy iron pike which lay upon the pavement ; "this shall do my purpose !" and seizing the weapon, he struck with violence upon the transparent and brittle surface of the wall, and repeating the blow, with additional force, the stalactic sheet gave way, broken and shattered like ice. In a few moments, under his heavy strokes, a breach was made through the partition, and a stream of light passed through the aperture into his part of the cave. Inspired to greater exertions by this success, he redoubled his efforts. But finding his strength failing before he could effect an opening sufficient to admit his body, he cast his eyes round for some more powerful agent. and they rested upon a broken spar leaning against the side of the outer cavern. This he grasped, and with all his remaining strength, bore it heavily against the breach, when, after repeating his efforts, a large mass fell inward and left a broad opening. With an exclamation of joy-

ful surprise, he sprung through the passage into the apartment.

It was an immense chamber, dimly lighted by a lamp, suspended, in chains, from the low ceiling. The walls, where they were not stuccoed with grey stalactic incrustations, were black. He paused a moment at the entrance, to give his vision power to perceive, through the mysterious half-illuminated darkness, the dimensions and details of the vault.

Through a large crevice above, he saw, faintly shining into the aperture, the moon, which, probably associated with the thoughts of her lover, suggested the song he heard. There appeared one inlet to the apartment, on the opposite side, which was now closed by a heavily barred door. In the centre of the chamber, under a kind of canopy made of canvass, was spread a rug, dyed of many brilliant colours. An old negress sat upon her heels, at the side of it, fast asleep, yet waving over the unoccupied carpet, a tuft of feathers. A basket of fruits, and a silver basin of spring water, stood near her, and various costly articles for the toilet, and a clasped missal and a guitar, lay upon a velvet cushion, placed at the head of the mat.

There was no other furniture in the vast cavern, which was silent and desolate—its distant extremities scarcely perceptible in the perpetual darkness which reigned there.

“Where has she disappeared?” exclaimed the lover, as his eye surveyed these details, without meeting the object he sought. Springing into the chamber, he started! as, lying by the side of a fallen stalactic pillar, he saw the lifeless form of the Castillian maiden.

He kneeled by her side, and placed his lips upon her own. They were scarcely warm with life, and the throbbing of her breast was faint, and her pulse,

as he pressed his finger upon her wrist, was like the dying vibration of a harp-string. Raising her, he bore her to the canopy, and placed her upon the humble couch, which, by the kindness of Théodore, had been placed in the chamber, awakened the old negress, and, with her aid, after a long time, restored her to consciousness.

"Blessed Maria! where am I?" faintly inquired the maiden, as she gazed around her.—"And did I hear his voice—can it be real!—oh! it was too much!—too much joy!"—and she looked eagerly up into the face of the negress.

"Juana, is it only you?" she added, in a disappointed tone. "Of what was I thinking?" And again she closed her eyes, as if endeavouring to recal some pleasing vision. "Did you not hear a voice, Juana? It was his,—yes! it must have been his! I thought it Lafitte's—he can speak like him, when he will, but it was his. D'Oyley's! my own Alphonse's!"

"Alphonse is near you, dear Constanza! look up," said the count, and she felt her hand pressed ardently, while a warm kiss was imprinted upon her lips.

Opening her eyes, and fixing them full upon her lover, who had retired a little, when animation first returned, lest his sudden presence, like the sound of his voice, should again throw her into insensibility.

"Is it, indeed, Alphonse?" she joyfully exclaimed, and, for a few moments, the lovers remained locked in each other's arms.

"What," she at length said, "have I not suffered!"

"I know it. I know all, Constanza! but, let us think of escape," he added—"Can you sit up?"—and raising her from the mat, sat beside her upon the cushion.

"Oh, what have I not suffered!" she repeated, leaning her head upon his shoulder, and bursting into tears. "I know not how, amidst all the dreary scenes I have passed through, I have retained my reason. And yet I live! and bless thee! dear Maria! all I love on earth, is by my side—my own Alphonse!" And she pressed him to her bosom, as if she feared he would again be separated from her.

"And still, my Constanza! in all these wild and fearful scenes—surrounded by such beings—in the power of such men—still, *my* Constanza? Forgive me, sweet one! but if you have suffered wrong, dearly shall you be revenged!"

"Constanza is still the Constanza you left her!" she cried, with emotion, while the rich blood mounted to her cheek, as she hid her face in his bosom; "although a prisoner, I have been treated with honour," and, as she spoke, truth and innocence were written upon her pure brow, too plainly to be misconstrued—and, clasping her in his arms, he exclaimed, "Too much happiness! Protector of the innocent!" he added, looking upward, "I thank thee!"

We will briefly pass over the story Constanza related to her lover, in which she detailed the incidents connected with her first capture from her father's roof—her liberation by the pirate—her second capture by one of his vessels, and her landing, the day before, at the cave. She also informed him of the departure of the vessel, which captured her, on another expedition—spoke of her lonely and desolate situation in the cavern, whither she was conveyed on leaving the vessel, and, in grateful terms, mentioned the kindness of young Théodore, who visited her occasionally, and had shown those attentions to her comfort, with which she was sur-

rounded, and also secured to her, notwithstanding the objections of the pirate, Sebastiano, the attendance of old black Juana ; who, with a fidelity, peculiar to the negro, had never left her from the time of her capture.

CHAPTER X.

"Some of the severest naval battles in which we have recently been engaged, in the West Indian seas, were between our cruisers and the pirates who infest them.

"These daring men, had fortified themselves in the natural caverns, abounding in those regions, in some cases rendering them almost impregnable, from which, in large armed vessels, they issued and spread devastation among our commerce."

RESIDENCE IN THE WEST INDIES.

PLAN OF ESCAPE—A SURPRISE—FIGHT WITH AN AMERICAN
CRUISER—LAFITTE.

THE night had far advanced before the Castilian maiden completed her relation.

"Dearest Constanza, how much you have passed through! and this Lafitte---he has magnanimity of soul, which, in a man of his lawless character, surprises me. But men, however lost to virtue, are never wholly depraved. The heavenly spark will yet linger in the heart, though hid from the eyes of men, and now and then will break suddenly out into flame.

I must meet this man---there is a nobleness about him that captivates me, and the more so, that it was unlooked for. Now that you are safe, dearest Constanza, my revenge is gone---I would know and redeem this extraordinary man. But," he added quickly, "let us escape from this fearful spot. He is not here to control the wild beings that surround us. There are several boats lying in the basin. Once outside---we can seize one of them,

and a few hours sail, will take us to the Mole, near Cape St. Nicholas, where we shall be safe from pursuit. This 'Théodore, of whom you speak so warmly, will he not favour our escape?"

"Ask him not, Alphonse---he would not refuse. Ask him not---although his benefactor be an outlaw, let us not tempt him to betray him. I would rather wait the return of Lafitte, than implicate this youth in our escape."

"You are right, noble girl! There is," he continued in a low, eager tone "but a single sentinel, at the mouth of the grotto, and here are weapons;" he exclaimed, with joyful surprise, as his eye rested upon a pair of pistols left by 'Théodore, "and loaded too! with these, and this pike, I can overcome all opposition. Come, Constanza, my brave one! this shall be the last trial of your fortitude. Lean upon my arm---heavier! the occasion has given me back my full strength. Juana, will you go with us---or stay with the pirates?"

"Ol' Juana go wid young buckra lady. If she be nigger she lub de lily 'ooman. Ol' Juana neber leab her if massa say."

"Take up that basket of fruit, and this carpet and cushion, to place in the boat and follow then, good Juana," he said to her, placing the pistols in his belt.

Then conducting Constanza, through the breach he had made in the wall, he led her into the chamber he had occupied.

"And here was your prison!" She said with feeling---"how lonely you must have been here, and wounded too! But blessed be the kind Maria for this meeting! If we escape not---I can die cheerfully in your arms. Happy thought! If we fail in our purpose, we can die together. Oh let us hasten, Alphonse!"

The count, lingered a moment to remove the

lamp from the wall. "Here Juana," he said, giving it to the slave, "go before with this light, we will follow some distance behind you in the darkness. The sentinel will perhaps let you pass to the outside, or if he stops you, to ask any questions, draw him aside and so glare the light upon his eyes, that we may pass him unseen. Have you tact enough for it."

"Hi! yes massa, Juana un'stand ebery ting---she know how mak fool ob Gaspàr."

The faithful slave, her singleness of heart singularly preserved in the rude life she had passed---whom the gentleness of Constanza had devoted to her interest---moved silently in advance, through the narrow passage, which after many windings, opened upon the terrace. The count, followed at a short distance, so as to be invisible in the shadow cast by the intervening person of the slave---the trembling Constanza leaning upon his arm, which passed around her waist, supported her drooping form. Solitude reigned in silence around them. Solitary cells branched out on either side, whose gloom, the rays of the lamp could not penetrate.

The walls were encrusted with gray stalactite or black, and covered with deep mould. As they advanced, the passage became narrower, and the roof descended within reach of their hands. All at once they entered a large dome, open to the sky---a hundred feet above them, waved heavily in the night winds, the branches of trees, overhanging the verge---thin white clouds drifted along the sky, and burning afar off, here and there appeared a star.

"Oh that we were as free as those clouds!" exclaimed Constanza, gazing upward at the lovely scene. "How happy I shall be to behold the blue heavens once more, and feel that I am free. Oh! that dismal cavern! To-night I awoke and the

moon was shining down upon me, through a small crevice in the ceiling. It fell full upon my face, and I felt it was the augury of happiness. The song you taught me, and say you love to hear me sing, came involuntary to my lips---and I had hardly ceased when I heard your voice, and sprung at the sound---and when I reflected a moment, I feared it was not yours; but, when assured of it, the tide of joy was too great! Oh the joy with which my heart bounded when I saw you bending over me!"

"Dearest Constanza!" he exclaimed, pressing her to his heart.

During this brief conversation, they had traversed the pavement of the dome and entered a dark narrow passage, which, after a few steps, grew broader and higher, and the cool wind came circling past them, from without.

"Hold Juana!" he called in a suppressed voice, we are now near the mouth---do you recollect my instructions?" he inquired, as the negress obeyed him. "Hark! what is that---a gun---another---a cannonading! Heaven avert danger! Constanza my dearest one! be not alarmed!" he said, feeling the form of the maiden shrink and tremble, as the loud reports fell upon her ear---"exert all your firmness for now we need it," he added, cheerfully and encouragingly, as he warmly pressed her hand, and, parting the rich hair, he imprinted a kiss upon her brow.

"I will---I will---Alphonse---it was but a momentary weakness---I will nerve myself for this hour of trial, I will be worthy of you." "Thank you, dearest---now remain here in this niche, with your faithful Juana, while I go and reconnoitre. Nay, do not be alarmed, I shall not expose myself to danger. I cannot forget that your life and happiness depend upon my caution. I will be with you in a mo-

ment," and rapidly as the darkness would permit, feeling his way with his pike, he advanced towards the entrance of the cave.

The firing still continued, and every succeeding report appeared nearer. Suddenly a ray of light, pencilled along the wall, caught his eye and turning an abrupt angle, a lamp suspended above him, glared brightly upon his face. Starting back into the shadow of the projecting rock, he looked cautiously forward and saw, although at some distance, the mouth of the cave, beyond which, was a glimpse of the moonlit bay---and the figure of a man, relieved against the silvery sheen of the sea, standing upon a projecting rock, far from the entrance of the grotto. This he concluded must be the guard, who had left his post attracted by the cannonading, with which, was now mingled the firing of musketry, and the shouts of combatants.

The officer passed hastily under the lamp, and approached the entrance with a noiseless footstep. Within a few feet of the exterior, was a shelf elevated the height of a man above the floor. This he lightly ascended, fearing to emerge into the moonlight, where the sentinel might observe him. From this point, thrown into shade by the overhanging arch of the cave, he obtained a view of the strait which led from the base of the cliff, between lines of rocks to the open sea.

About a mile from the shore, clouds of white smoke rested upon the water, from which could be seen the sails and spars of a large vessel, apparently a brig, above which rolled dense volumes of smoke, accompanied by the roar and flash of cannon. Nearer the shore, and just entering the narrow avenue which led from the sea into the basin, at the foot of the cave, was a large schooner under press of sail, occasionally discharging a gun at the other vessel, which appeared in chase of her.

As the count climbed to the shelf, the cannonading ceased, the smoke rolled away over the water to the leeward shore, and circling up the cliff settled upon their summits, and the clear moonlight shone quietly upon the scene, whitening the canvass of the approaching vessel, which was now passing up the strait. The large vessel was discovered lying to, and three boats apparently filled with armed men---for the light glanced from many musket barrels and cutlasses, as the boats pulled silently and rapidly into the shore.

"A buccaneer chased by a cruiser!" he exclaimed. "Heaven grant she may be captured. There is a better chance of our escape than I looked for---if victory side with the right."

The schooner now approached so near the termination of the long rocky passage, that the voices on board reached his ears, with the sound of hasty feet upon her deck, the creaking of rigging, and the rushing of the water, as she ploughed it up before her. He watched her until she almost came under the cliffs, so that the tops of her masts were level with his eye, when she bore up into the basin at the base of the rock, and was laid with great skill alongside its perpendicular face. Loud voices of men mingled with fierce oaths and execrations, and groans of wounded men rose tumultuously from below.---

"Ho, there! Gaspàr! The rock, ho!" shouted a stern voice.---"Are you asleep?---bring the gun to bear upon the hindermost boat, and discharge it."

Gaspàr who had deserted his post for a moment, to witness the chase, sprung to the platform and swinging the piece round, levelled it,---then rushing into the cave, and passing directly under the count, he seized a match---lighted it at the distant lamp, and returning, applied the flaming rope to the

loaded piece.—A deafening report followed, and the nearest boat became at once a scene of confusion, while shrieks and loud voices filled the air.

“Bravely done, my good Gaspàr!” said a man who, ascending the rigging of the schooner, and stepping along the fore-top-sail-yard, sprung upon the terrace.

The count, as the figure of the stranger was relieved against the sky, thought he had never seen so commanding a person, so much muscular power united with such grace and activity.

“This must be Lafitte!” he exclaimed, mentally. The individual who attracted his attention turning at the moment, the moon shone full upon his face, displaying his fine aquiline features---his dark eye, and brown cheek.

“It is indeed he! That face and form can belong to no other,” said he mentally, drawing himself farther within the shadow of the rock, that he might observe, unseen, the movements of the buccaneers.

The pirate had hardly ascended to the platform before he was followed by a dozen of his crew, who, with astonishing rapidity, mounted the rigging after him, each man heavily armed, and many of them wild and fierce-looking men---nearly as brown and as naked as savages.

“Ho, there below!” shouted their leader. “Bring the guns to bear on those boats, and rake them as they come up the passage.”

The boats, one of which had evidently been struck by the shot from the gun fired by Gaspàr, rapidly advanced, although the one injured by the ball and which had taken the lead, was now laboriously pulling on last of all.

They had yet some distance to row directly in range of the gun on the platform, and exposed to the fire of the pirate’s schooner, which was drawn up

before it, presenting with her broadside facing the enemy, a formidable battery.

"Let them come within pistol shot!" exclaimed the leader, "then wait the word---Aim every piece at the stern of each boat---Powder and balls here, for this gun,---charge her briskly, men! and with double shot---Ho, the Gertrude!" he shouted, looking down upon the deck of his vessel---"think you have men enough on board, Ricardo, to hold her---if too hard pressed retreat and join us---they are sending another boat from the brig---we shall have enough to do---be cool and firm,---remember all of you, we fight at an advantage, and no man will forget he fights for his head."

"Fire, Carlos!" he cried in a loud voice after giving his orders, and disposing his men on different parts of the platform, and around the gun. "Sink that nearest boat, and you shall command the schooner."

Half a dozen flashes gleamed above the rock, and the whole broadside of the schooner, which commanded the whole breadth of the channel, was discharged at once. As soon as a cloud of thick smoke which rolled up before the platform was b'own along the cliff---the pirate bent an eager eye upon the boats, which, still to his astonishment, approached uninjured, and with renewed velocity.

"Holy devils! who aimed those guns," he shouted in a voice of thunder.---By the God that made you, men! you shall rue such boy's play.. Away from this gun!"---he shouted, sweeping a circle around him with his cutlass---as he sprung to the gun, and with a single hand, wheeled it to the verge and depressed it upon the leading boat. Then, snatching a match from the hand of one of his men, he applied it to the powder.

"Ha! blessed St. Antonio," he exclaimed, as a loud crash, and shouts, and yells, followed the

report;—and the smoke drifting away, he saw a score of men struggling in the water, and clinging to the oars and fragments of their shattered boat.

“Fire upon them, men,” he shouted, “make your pistols ring merrily—one more broadside, Ricardo, and I forgive the last,” he cried, with exultation in his voice and manner. But the other boats were too near for the large guns to bear upon them, as emerging from the straits, they rapidly approached, one on the quarter, and the other on the bows of the schooner. Those belonging to the last boat who were not shot in the head as they swam, were either picked up by the other boats, or gained the rocks on one side of the basin, or with uncooled daring, reached the schooner just as the remaining two boats struck her side.

With the courage of lions, the, till now, passive men, leaped from their boats, and poured over the vessel’s side, in spite of the desperate struggles of the buccaneers, to hurl them over into the water. In a few seconds the deck of the schooner exhibited a scene of fearful carnage. The pirates were overpowered by the superior numbers of their opponents, and began to give way. Their chief who had his hand upon a stay, and was about descending to endeavour, to turn the tide of battle, witnessing the unequal contest, paused and shouted to them to mount, and leave the vessel to the enemy.—All at once the rigging was alive with the pirates, who ascended, before their astonished foes, with often practised activity, and threw themselves from the yards upon the terrace.

“Up men, follow them!” cried the leader of the party who had boarded the vessel—“never let American tars be outdone by those cowardly Spanish cut-throats!” and he sprung into the rigging as he spoke, rapidly followed by his band; and ascending, with reckless daring, he gained the topmast cross-

trees, crossed the yard, cutlass in hand, and sprung upon the terrace into the midst of his foes, before his real character was discovered.

"Over with him!" cried a dozen voices. "Heave him into the sea!" and a host of cutlasses were brandished about his head. But he was so rapidly seconded by his men, who leaped from the yards upon the rock as fast as they could follow one another, that the pirates had not time to deal him a fatal blow, before each one found himself in mortal combat with an American sailor.

Long and bloody was the fight. Living men were hurled upon the deck of the vessel below with terrific violence, or into the deep flood beneath. Blood flowed like water, and the cries, groans, and shouts of the combatants rose wildly in the air, multiplied into a thousand echoes among the cliffs. The pirates numbered about fifty, and the force of the Americans was nearly equal. The deck of the vessel was deserted, save by a solitary figure crawling about; and wounded and slain men were locked in the deadly embrace in which they had fallen from the cliff, and limbs and bones were strewed in great numbers through the vessel. The fight raged fiercely directly in front of the cavern, and the pirates at last, hotly pressed, retreated to its mouth.

Here their leader, whose form the count had seen like the genius that directed the battle, whenever the fight raged hottest, whose voice of command and encouragement was heard above the din of the conflict, and whose arm carried death wherever it fell. Many of his men had fallen around him, yet he remained cool and undaunted; and collecting his followers about him, he slowly retreated down the terrace to the entrance of the cave.

"Press him hard--drive him to his den, my hearties!" shouted the officer who had first ascended the rigging, and who, through the whole conflict

had fought with that daring and unabated energy for which American sailors are distinguished.

The terrace was strewn with the dead and dying; and Lafitte, with half the original number of his men, stood near the mouth of the cavern, fighting hand to hand with the officer, who had sought him out, like a tiger at bay.

The count had remained in his concealment a witness of the fight, until the retreat of the pirates towards the mouth of the cavern, just within which he stood. As they filled the entrance, full of alarm for Constanza, whom he had left in the grotto, he suddenly sprung from the elevated station upon which he stood during the fight, on to the floor of the cave, and flew towards its interior. But the noise he made alarmed the buccaneers, who turned and gazed upon his retreating figure with astonishment.

“We are surprised!” shouted several voices, and two or three of the pirates darted after him, and before he could pass round the angle in the passage, near which the lamp was suspended, he was compelled to turn upon his pursuers and defend his life. Two of the pirates assailed him at once, and he had only his pike to parry the blows of their cutlasses, when a thrust of his weapon through the sword arm of one of them caused him to drop his cutlass, which, with an exclamation of joy, the count seized, and rained blows upon his unwounded antagonist, whom he soon disabled. But before he could avail himself of this advantage, he was assailed by others of the band, who, on hearing the cry that they were taken in the rear, left the mouth of the cave, and turned their blades upon their new enemy.

The passage was narrow, scarcely admitting the wielding of their weapons with full effect. At this point the fight now became desperate. Driven into the cave by their opponents, and finding their way

obstructed in the rear, the buccaneers fought like fiends. Five of them fell beneath the cutlass of the count, who, fearing the fatal consequences of their entrance to Constanza's safety, and aware that his own life also was at stake, and perhaps actuated by a desire to second the attack of the American sailors, fought with the power and effect of an armed phalanx in his single arm.

The American officer had fallen severely wounded before the vigorous attacks of the outlaw, and leaving the less distinguished of his antagonists to his men, the victor turned upon the daring stranger, who, single-handed, stood defending the narrow passage.

"Santo Diablo! whom have we here? Give back, men—give back! he has sent enough of you to the devil;" and treading over the dead bodies of his men, who had fallen by the hand of the desperate Frenchman, he shouted, "Let me cross blades with this stranger," aiming, as he spoke, a blow at the head of the officer, which was parried and returned with the skill of a master of the weapon.

For several seconds their rapidly clashing weapons rung against each other, flashing fiercely in the light of the lamp suspended above their heads.

The count, weak from his former wounds, and bleeding from fresh ones, soon began to show signs of exhaustion. His opponent discovered this, and changing his mode of fighting, used all his skill to disarm him and take him prisoner.

"Surrender, sir—it is madness to contend against such odds," cried the pirate. The only reply he received was a stroke from the count's cutlass, which nearly cleft the thick cap he wore through to his head. Enraged, the pirate raised his weapon, throwing all his muscular power into his arm for a decisive blow, when a wild shriek rang through the vault, and Constanza suddenly appeared before

them, with a terrified eye, her luxuriant tresses dishevelled and floating over her shoulders, and her mantle disarranged in her struggles to break away from her faithful attendant, who would have held her.

The pirate started at the shriek and figure of the maiden, indistinctly seen in the obscurity of the cavern, and suddenly arrested his weapon, but too late to withhold the blow, which descended with half its original force upon the defenceless head of the count. He staggered and fell into the arms of Constanza, who, with an eye in which timidity had given place to resolution, caught his head upon her bosom, over which sprinkled the warm blood of her lover, and erecting her figure to its full height, with her disengaged arm, she drew a pistol from his belt, and levelled it at the heart of the buccaneer. The motion brought her brow under the full light of the lamp, and he, with an exclamation of surprise, as he recognized, in those full features, stamped with heroic energy and woman's self-devotion, the fair Castillian, for whom, but a few days before, he had made magnanimous sacrifice of his love.

"Doña Constanza! can it be!" he cried, in amazement. Then instantly changing his tone, he laid his hand upon his heart, and said, with a voice of emotion and humility, "Fire, lady! thus shall be expiated my crime!"

The pistol dropped from her hand---"Lafitte!" she exclaimed, after an instant's silent surprise, during which doubt and confidence struggled within her bosom. "Oh, what have you done? This is your bloody deed. Help, help, or he will die in my arms!" and tearing her mantilla, she attempted to staunch the blood which flowed freely from a slight cut in his head.

"Forgive! forgive! lady!" cried the chief, springing to her assistance. "Leave this wounded stran-

ger to me---those shouts tell me the enemy are retreating. Go, señora, I will attend you ; such a scene as this is not for your presence. Leave him to my care---I see you feel an interest in him!---that is enough for me-- he shall be cared for as if he were a brother. ' Nay, nay," he added, suddenly changing countenance ; " as if he were Constanza Velasquez," and he spoke the last words tenderly.

She resigned him to his arms, and cried earnestly, " Bear him into the inner cave. The light, Juana !" and with eager footsteps she preceded the outlaw, who bore the wounded officer in his arms. Entering the cave originally occupied by the count, and directing him to be laid on the bamboo rushes in the niche, she kneeled beside him, and forgetful of the presence of the chief, seemed wholly absorbed in her wounded lover.

By the activity of Juana, the presence of mind and experience of the outlaw, and the angelic tenderness of the maiden---all those attentions which his state required, were completed, and the count, who had not been wholly unconscious, although he betrayed his sense of consciousness only by an occasional writhing of his features, fell into a broken sleep. From the moment she kneeled by his couch, she had remained silent ; but when the eyes of her lover were closed, she looked up into the face of Lafitte, who, after his services were no longer required, stood, with folded arms and a thoughtful brow, gazing in silence upon the scene.

" Señor Lafitte !" said the lady, " did you know of his capture ? "

" No, lady, nor your own ! I am surrounded with mystery. Why do I find you here ? Why this interest in this wounded man ? " he suddenly exclaimed, striking his forehead,—" ah ! can it be ! it is— ? "

" The Count D'Oyley of the French navy, Señor,

to whom I am betrothed," she said, with feeling and dignity.

The face of the pirate changed, and a slight flush passed across his brow. But this momentary exhibition of feeling gave place to an expression of interest.

"Lady!" he said, with a slight embarrassment in his manner, "this officer shall be cared for. I regard him as a sacred trust!—moreover, he is free from this moment! Tell me, lady, how you came to be once more a captive—voluntarily to share a prison with him? Resolve this mystery, which I cannot fathom."

In a few words she related to him the incidents of her re-capture, and her conveyance to the cavern—the expedition of her lover—his capture—their meeting in the cavern—and their attempt to escape, just as his vessel was chased in by the American cruiser.

"Would to God, lady, you had both escaped, before I had again met you! But, adieu! Señora, I must leave you for the present," he exclaimed, as the report of the gun at the mouth of the cavern reverberated through the long passages of the grotto. "Where is Théodore, lady? I will send him to you."

"I know not, Señor, but perhaps he is near. He was sleeping in the outer apartment, by the door, when I left it. I thank you, Señor," she added, struck with the outlaw's delicacy, in proposing Théodore to watch over the count—"Juana will call him—happy youth!—he has slept amid all this storm of death!"

A loud shout without, now called Lafitte away, after assuring her that she should be sacred from intrusion, and Constanza was left alone by the couch of her lover. Claspings her hands, she raised her full eyes to heaven, and remained several

minutes: the pale lamp painting, with light and shade, her lovely face, lost in devotion. "Thy will, not mine, be done," she said aloud, with a voice of resignation, as she rose from her devotional attitude, and with a more cheerful brow and lighter heart, she turned and addressed her young attendant, who, with surprise pictured upon his countenance, was listening to the strange recital of the events of the night, which Juana, with characteristic volubility was detailing to him.

"Shame upon my drowsy eyes," said Théodore, with evident mortification in his manner,—“You find me but a poor knight, lady. But who is this pale stranger?” he exclaimed, inquiringly, as his eye fell upon the handsome features of the wounded count.

“He is an officer of the French navy, the count D’Oyley. Théodore, you have heard me speak of him,” she added, with a faint and sweet smile, “he is severely wounded; I fear I need your aid to nurse him.”

The youth expressed his devotion to her slightest wish, and, placing himself near the sleeper, passed the succeeding hour in listening to the thrilling tale, told by the maiden, with an absorbing interest, that swallowed all time but the present moment.

CHAPTER XI.

“When, from sentiments of honour, and desire to act justly towards those over whom he may possess temporary power, a man renounces the cherished idols of his bosom, preferring their happiness, with the certain forfeiture of his own, he has achieved the greatest victory of which he is capable.—A victory over himself.—SHERWOOD.

A COLLOQUIAL SCENE—INTERIOR OF A BUCCANEER’S RENDEZVOUS—
SOLILOQUY, OR STRUGGLE BETWEEN HONOUR AND PASSIONS—AN
INTERRUPTION.

THE morning broke upon the watches, and found them still by the bedside of the wounded officer. His wound had been rather a severe contusion, with the side of the pirate’s cutlass, than a deep cut.

After passing the remainder of the night in feverish slumber, he awoke, as the hand of the maiden was gently parting the hair from his brow.

“Is it you, sweet one?” he said, with a faint smile—the whole scene of the preceding night coming, at once, to his recollection! Have you been watching by me through the long hours of the night! How kind, Constanza! But speak!” he added, suddenly rising, “tell me—where is my antagonist, the buccaneer, who wounded me? Did I not see you near me, when I fell? I have a half-consciousness of being caught by you. Devoted

“Constanza ! was it not so ? and was I not borne, by some one, back to this cave ? Who was it ? was he wounded ? or—” looking with anxious affection into her face, “you, my dearest ! were you hurt ?” he continued, with feverish rapidity, as the various scenes he had passed through, came, indistinctly, and unconnected, to his mind.

“Nay, nay, dear Alphonse ! I cannot reply to all your rapid questions. You must not rise so soon—be quiet. There is no danger to you, or me !”

“But I am better, dearest !” he said, playing with a truant tress, which hung over her temples. “I am better ! my sleep has been refreshing.”

“But your wound ?”

“It is but slight, although it must have been given with a good-will at the time ; a little patch will make all sound as ever. But, my sweet Constanza, do not be alarmed ! Who was the pirate that fought so fiercely ? Ah !” he suddenly exclaimed, as his eye rested upon the slight form of young Théodore, who stood within the niche—“whom have we here ?”

“The youth, Théodore, of whom I spoke,” she replied.

“Ah ! I remember ! Monsieur Théodore, pardon me, young sir ! I owe you better courtesy ! You have loaded me with a debt of gratitude.

“Speak of that at another time, Monsieur, your health requires silence and repose,” replied the youth, remarking the mixture of indecision and energy in his manner and language, which he attributed to the fever of his wound.

“Not so, my good youth. I must thank you now. Yet, I know not how ! You are a sailor,” he continued, after a moment’s thought ; “will you take a midshipman’s berth on board the Sultan ?”

"I thank you, but I need no reward for performing my duty, if I have deserved any. I have sufficiently received it, by knowing that I have been instrumental in adding to this kind lady's happiness. A kind word from her lips is more than I dare hope to ask!" he added, with a blushing brow.

"You are modest, for a protégé of Lafitte, fair youth," he replied, smilingly, "but this lady will not only give you words of kindness, I think, but her white hand to kiss! will you not, Constanza? and this, as you hint, were honour enough, for belted knight in days of Charlemagne."

Constanza, with a sweet smile, presented her hand to the youth, who, bending over it with an air of devout respect, pressed his lips lightly to the taper fingers.

At this instant a foot-fall was heard, echoing through the chamber Constanza had occupied, and she had hardly said—

"It is Lafitte," when the outlaw appeared at the breach in the stalactic drapery of the cave, and before passing into the apartment, gazed silently for a few seconds upon the group.

When Lafitte left the lovers, after the count had fallen asleep, he traversed the long passage with a rapid tread and an aching heart. He found the terrace strewn with dead and dying; several of his men leaning with an air of fatigue against the sides of the cliff, or upon the cannon, which had just been fired at the retreating Americans, who, driven over the verge, sprung into the water, or slid down the stays to the deck, with the loss of more than half their number, besides two wounded officers, one of whom they bore from the deck into the boat, severely hurt. Then with rapidity they pulled rapidly down the passage to their vessel.

"Ho, Carlos! below there!" he shouted.

"Carlos es muerte!" said faintly a wounded pirate, who rested on his cutlass.

"Ha! dead! Ho, the deck there—fire upon that boat! Do you mean to let them man the brig again and blockade us?—Fire!"

"No es possible, señor," cried one from the schooner. "Los Americans have spike all de gun."

"Spiked the guns! Maldicho! how was that done, Matéo?"

"No se, señor! no es possible to tell. I hear de click, click, five six time, when one sailor run over de gun to de boat; and when I put de prime ob de horn in de hole, dere was no hole dere, all fill up with big rusty nail."

"Spiked, ha! well, let them go—they will be glad enough to get out of this and show the old rock the stern of their brig," said he, quietly.

After Lafitte, with much humanity, had attended to the wounded, and given orders for the disposal of the dead, who numbered seventeen of the Americans, and more than twenty of the buccaneers, he placed the watch for the remainder of the night, and then, last of all, attended to his own wounds, which, though not severe, were numerous. He entered the cavern, and passing the spot which the count had defended, and from which the bodies had been removed, he traversed the passage for a few yards, and then turned into one of those recesses which the fugitives had supported;—niches, which opened before him as he advanced, increasing in height and breadth. Although perfectly dark, he traversed this new avenue with an unfaltering footstep, and like one familiar with its details.

About seventy paces from the main passage, he came into a small vaulted apartment, lighted fitfully by the flickering flame of an expiring fire, which had been kindled near the centre against a

fragment of rock which had fallen from the side of the grotto, and rolled into the middle of the floor. Several chests, such as seamen use to contain their apparel, rude camp stools, a round polished table, with a marble top, piles of cordage, rolls of canvass, and heaps of old sails, with many other articles necessary to the repair and preservation of vessels, filled the sides of the apartment.

On a projecting shelf, at the extremity of the cave, stood a costly pier-glass, the height of a man, with radii diverging from a point near the centre, as if a bullet had shattered it. One of the chests, the lid of which was up, displayed a number of cutlasses and pistols, and a pyramid of shot, adapted to the calibre of the piece of ordnance at the mouth of the cave, was piled at one end of it, and laid against the wall, tied up like faggots, were several bundles of pikes. In a distant niche, placed one upon another, were several kegs, half seen indistinctly in the obscurity, covered by a tarpaulin, which had been hastily displaced, and branded "*poudre à canon.*"

A long table, of that construction best adapted to a ship's cabin, extended nearly across the cave, about half way between the fire and the sides, which were perfectly smooth and black, and nowhere incrustated with stalactite.

An upturned bench lay near, and parallel with the table; upon which stood, in bacchanalian confusion, bottles of French wines, glasses, deep plates, and tureens, with vessels for preparing coffee. It was without a cloth, wet with spilled wine, and strewn with fish bones, and fragments of bread and meat.

Mattresses lay about the floor, and one or two hammocks were swung across from side to side. at the left hand of the shattered mirror was a recess, terminating in a heavy door, apparently con-

structed of the plank of a ship, as circular apertures once filled with spikes, and the traces of other adaptation of the material than the present, sufficiently indicated.

This part of the grotto was evidently appropriated by the buccaneers as the armory, store-room, and hall of feasting and carousing.

It was silent and deserted as the outlaw entered, except by the ungainly figure of his slave, Cudjoe, who lay with his naked feet to the fire, his head closely wrapped in a soiled blanket, fast asleep, preferring the embraces of Somnus to those of Mars, from which he had escaped at the commencement of the conflict.

Lafitte gazed upon the scene around him with a bitter smile.

"And this," he said, with a cloudy brow, after standing awhile in silence, "this is my abode! the outlaw's home!—this my domestic hearth—this my social board—for the plaudits of such as I command—for the boast of a beast like this slave! Is it for this I live! alas, I have lived in vain! all, all in vain!" and he paced the cave with an agitated step, while hatred for his present life, aspirations for an honourable career, and love for the Castilian maiden, filled his mind with conflicting emotions.

"She is in my power once more," he hoarsely whispered; "have I not made sufficient sacrifice in letting her once depart! Is my passion again to be immolated upon the altar of self-denial! Yet I may not use the power I possess. I love her—and only to honourable love shall she be sued! But will she listen!—Listen!—am I mad—listen with her hand upon the brow, and kneeling beside the couch of her betrothed husband! Success is now doubly walled up against me. But if he die!—ah, if he die!—as he may—as he must!" he added with a ringing voice, and starting at the guilty thoughts

which stirred his bosom; but suddenly checking himself, he continued, in a lower tone—"No, no, no!—I am sick of crime!—back, back, tempter—I will win her fairly. Am I indeed so base as to wish this maiden ill—to think of destroying so much happiness when I can make it bliss! If he should not live—then! then, perhaps!--but no—oh, God, no!--have I not stricken the blow--and will she place her hand in his, red with her lover's blood?—Will she give her heart to be healed by him who broke it? But time, perhaps, might mitigate and veil over the bitter memory of the past--and then," and his step became more elastic, and his brow clear as he spoke, but as suddenly changed again. "Alas! there is no hope for me!---she never---never can love me!---her spirit is too pure to mingle with mine. It is in vain for me to hope---yet I must love her---love her---for ever! But I will school myself to think of her without passion---worship her as a lovely incarnation of the Virgin!"

For an hour he paced the grotto, struggling with his passion, which, one moment gaining the ascendancy, filled his mind with dark and guilty purposes; but immediately yielding to the dictates of honour, and the native generosity of his character, he would picture forth scenes of happiness for her and her lover in the vista of the future. His step was irregular, his features worked convulsively, his brow was bent with the violence of the struggle.

"I will—I will!" he at length said, suddenly stopping. "She shall respect--if she cannot love me---only with gratitude shall she remember Lafitte! They shall both be free, and this very day will I myself take them to Port-au-Prince. If I cannot make my own happiness, I will not mar theirs---nay, I will make it---I will teach my passion this step;" and his voice became calmer as he spoke. "As I now feel," he continued, "I think

I could place her hand within his, and bid Heaven bless them. Yes, then I could seek an early death on the battle-field, or in the seclusion of a monastery atone for my past life by penance and prayer. Penance and prayer!" he repeated, with an altered voice, while a disdainful expression dwelt upon his lip, as though he had given utterance to thoughts of which he became at once ashamed. "Yes---beads and rosaries! genuflexions and ablutions, fasts and confessions! cowl and gown! truly these would well become me! Yet, for all that, it may yet be to what my coward heart will drive me. Nevertheless, this lady shall go free, whatever shall be my future fate."

He then threw himself upon one of the rude couches, and bringing the butt of his pistols round to the ready grasp of his hand, he sought in the oblivion of sleep, to forget himself.

Sleep! blessing both of the innocent and guilty! With thy presence thou visitest like the rain, both the just and the unjust. Angel of charity, messenger from on high, sent down to shorten half the weary pilgrimage of life! Sister of mercy---the curse of Eden would have been unmingled without thee. Thou hast shared with us the heavy load, and cooled the sweating brow, and for us borne half the burden and heat of the long day of existence!

He awoke at dawn refreshed, and with a calmer breast. Low voices struck his ear, from beyond the door within the recess. He listened a moment in surprise, and then rising quickly he unlocked the door, and entered the apartment once occupied by Constanza.

The canopy and other preparations made by the order and attention of Théodore for her comfort, caught his eye—for all parts of the cave was now visible by the daylight, let in from the crevices and apertures in the roof. His rapid glance also detect-

ed the breach made by the count, and he at once understood the object of it ; and as he was advancing to examine it, the voices of the party in the adjoining chamber became distinct.

“Ha ! my captive lover is better it seems,” he exclaimed as the words struck his ear. “But, he has made a soldier’s breach through this wall. Constanza then was placed here by that prosy fool Sebastiano ; and thick-skulled, Dutch Getzendanner must place his prisoner within ear-shot. It is said there is no separating true lovers, and here is most visible proof of it. What have we here, Cie-los ! the maiden’s sparkling crucifix, dropped in her flight,” he suddenly added, eagerly seizing the jewel which caught his eye ; “This next my heart forever !” he fervently exclaimed, pressing it to his lips—“this shall be twice worshipped—I devote it to heaven, and love,” and he hung it around his neck by its chain, concealing the cross in his bosom.

“Protégé of Lafitte !” he repeated with bitter emphasis, as he overheard the words of D’Oyley. “Monsieur Le Compte thinks there can come nothing good out of Nazareth ! Ha ! how cavalierly he gives away the lady’s hand to the boy’s lip—pity that so fair a scene should be interrupted.”

“Señora, buenos dias tenga vñ. Monsieur Compte, I trust you are much better. Théodore, welcome back again !” and as he entered the chamber, he grasped the hand of the boy with a smile of pleasure—bowed coldly to the count, who was sitting on his couch of bamboo-rushes in the niche, and with an air of profound respect, bent low to the maiden.

“Pardon this intrusion, Señora, I knew not of this passage between the rooms, it being made since my last visit to our rendezvous, probably for greater facilities of intercourse,” and he smiled meaningly,

"and hearing voices, I came to learn from whence they proceeded."

"Monsieur," he continued "I am happy to see you so far recovered from your wounds. You are at liberty to depart, when you are well enough to be removed."

"I thank you, Monsieur Lafitte," replied the count, courteously, "My wound was but trifling. I am able to move; but, monsieur, permit me to say, how profoundly I feel your kindness extended to this lady!"

"Enough, count, I followed my own feelings. It is not for you to thank me,"—said he sternly—"speak of your departure."

"If I am at liberty, as you say, I would leave at once. Have you any news of my schooner? you have I presume heard the particulars of my capture?"

"Yes, Monsieur, in a few words from Gaspàr--- of your vessel, I have not heard. I will take you to Port au Prince, in my schooner as soon as she undergoes some repairs. She will be ready by the morning."

"Thank you, Monsieur; and this lady?"

"Shall accompany you, sir!" he replied in a deep voice, that drew the eye of the count upon his face, which reflected the agitation of his mind, produced by the question, and the associations which it called up.

"Sacre!" exclaimed the count, suspicious of the cause of Lafitte's emotion, suddenly flashing across his mind.

"Are you in pain, Alphonse?" inquired Constanza, with a changing cheek, as she remarked his exciting manner.

"No! yes! great!" and he laid his hand upon his breast.

Lafitte smiled scornfully, and he glanced at the

officer with an expression of dislike. After a few moments, vexed at the silence of Constanza, who had not raised her eyes from her lover's face, since he entered, he left the cave accompanied by Théodore, whom he took with him, to ascertain more particularly than he had learned from Gaspâr, the details of their capture, and the events succeeding it.

While the pirate chief neglected nothing that could contribute to the comfort of Constanza, and the count, he refrained from visiting them during the day, resolved to have no farther communication with the lovely Castillian, lest his resolution should forsake him—and under the influence of passion, increased by the presence of the maiden, he should throw off all his honourable resolves for her happiness—the consequences of which he dare not contemplate.

The struggle in his own mind was prolonged, and severe. At one moment he was ready to rush into her presence, throw himself at her feet, and plead his deep, unconquerable love—at another moment he would feed upon the reflection, that she was in his power, and he resolved that he would not let her go. Again the wild idea of challenging the count to single combat, or the more guilty one of exposing him in his wounded state to die, would by turns fire his bosom. The exclamation of the count, which he had attributed to sudden pain, repeatedly occurred to him, and he curled his lip contemptuously as he said mentally,

“He is jealous of me. The proud Frenchman fears Lafitte may take a fancy to have so fair a protégée; hatred for him could almost tempt me to detain this lovely flower, did I not love her so well as I too truly do—did I not know that her happiness, which alone I seek, is bound up in him. Dios! he has a noble presence, and is a man a lady might

well love—yet I love her too well for this,” he added with feeling. “The jealous count should rather thank my love for the lady’s safety, than show his jealousy. If I loved her not, as I never loved woman—Ha, a footstep! Who goes there? It is but fancy, or but a bat,” he said as a slight noise, which he thought a footstep, at the extremity of the passage struck his ear. “But alas,” he continued—“Gertrude—I have loved thee, thou art not forgotten. Well he shall have her”---he hastily added, and God help me, he shall have her from my hand---and I will have the approval of my conscience, for at least one disinterested act. To-morrow they go! and as he spoke he swung himself from the terrace on to the rigging of his vessel, and descending to the deck, forwarded by his presence, the repairs and preparations for sailing early on the morning of the coming day.

CHAPTER XII.

"The same kind, though not degree, of genius is as necessary to plan and direct the escape of an individual, from a perilous situation, as of an army."—LAMB.

"Wine and wassail have taken more strong places than gun or steel."—CHESTERFIELD.

PLAN OF ESCAPE—JUANA AND THE GUARDS—A STRATAGEM.

THE stars burned like lamps in the clear, Indian skies. The air was motionless, and broken only by some alarmed bird fluttering chirpingly from tree to tree, or the suppressed moan of the surge—profound silence reigned without and within the deep chambers of the grotto.

The guard, posted rather to give the alarm when vessels approached the shore, than to guard the prisoners, paced slowly along the terrace in front of the cavern, with his cutlass resting carelessly upon his left arm. The deck of the schooner below him was covered with sleepers, who, after the fatigues of the day, had thrown themselves upon it, in various positions. The remainder of the outlaw's crew were sleeping in the magazine of the cave, where Lafitte had passed the preceding night.

The outlaw himself, after promenading the passage in which we left him, a long time in troubled thought, threw himself upon the cold pavement, and also slept; but his dreams were of his lovely captive.

He was kneeling before an altar in a gloomy and

gorgeous temple, beside a veiled female. A priest, in rich robes, was in the act of pronouncing a blessing over them. He was about to press her to his heart, when she suddenly changed to the bleeding corse of his young brother. He cried with horror and awoke.

Again he dreamed Constanza was struggling in the sea. He sprang into the flood to save her, when a gigantic monster, with large, beautiful eyes—a knife buried in his bosom, and blood oozing from his temples, caught her from his grasp, and conveyed her from his sight, into the depths of the ocean. With a convulsed frame, he started from his dream.

A third time he slept. He was in the cathedral of New Orleans, and about to be united to Constanza, who stood beside him, veiled in white. She was just parting her lips to pronounce the solemn words which should unite their destinies forever, when the priest removed his mask, cast off his robes, and clasped her in his arms. It was the Count D'Oyley.

In the mean time, the count was in the chamber, lighted by a single lamp, where he had been borne the preceding night; but he slept not. Constanza, with her head resting upon his shoulder, slumbered peacefully, and her dreams were all of happiness.

“Constanza, my love! awake!” said her lover, gently touching her closed eyes.

He had long been engaged in ruminating upon his condition, upon the character of Lafitte, and the probability that he would be in the same mind in the morning, with regard to their liberation.

The more he reflected, the greater his doubts became, and when he recalled, with a feeling of apprehension and indignation, the language, tone, and manner, of the outlaw, in his interview with

him in the morning, the detached sentences he had overheard when his footsteps interrupted his soliloquy, his confidence in his promises failed, and he at once resolved to make his escape before day; fearing even to remain through the night, subject to the caprice of his captor.

"Awake, love!" he said, softly, as he came to this determination.

"What, Alphonse, is it you? Are there more trials for me?" and she looked up into his face, with her eloquent eyes, suddenly suffused with tears, and clinging to his arm, with nervous apprehension.

"No, my Constanza—I think we may escape from this place—I dare not trust Captain Lafitte's firmness till the morning."

"Oh, have you fresh cause for alarm or suspicion? Tell me! Leave me not in suspense;" and she looked with an alarmed manner into his face.

"No, love! but I fear he may change his mind, he is an impulsive being, and if we can escape, it will not be prudent to remain till morning."

"You have heard something, dear Alphonse! I know you have, that leads you to this sudden step, and you are still so weak—oh, tell me all!" she added, earnestly—"am I not worthy of your confidence?"

"All, all confidence, dearest!—Your suspicions are true! Not long since, when I walked along the passage to breathe the cooler air, at the mouth of the cave, I heard the voice of Lafitte, as you tell me is his habit, in soliloquy. Thinking I might learn something which in our situation, could be improved to advantage, I cautiously approached the gallery, along which he was pacing backwards and forwards, and heard sufficient to alarm me for your safety and my own, and to lead me to place

but slight confidence in his promise, to take us to Port-au-Prince to-morrow, will you not second me, dearest?"

"Can we escape, Alphonse? and why should we fear to trust Lafitte? He is impulsive, it is true, but would not, I think, err intentionally, or deceive us. But I will go with you, dearest! never will I be separated from you again! Whom do I love or have to love or care for me, but you, my Alphonse! Oh, let us go :---he may, indeed, be in another mood in the morning," she added, hastily, as some part of his first interview with her flashed on her mind, "Oh, I fear---fear him much. I will go with you, let us hasten---but how?"

"There was a felucca at the foot of the rock, which I saw, as I was brought in, a prisoner, containing a small mast. It was lying opposite the long passage. If we can gain this boat, unperceived, in an hour we will be beyond pursuit, and, with a light breeze, by to-morrow evening, be able to reach Port-au-Prince. Now let us arrange our plan."

"Shall I waken Juana?"

"You would best, she may assist us materially."

The slave, who was asleep in the extremity of the chamber, was roused, with difficulty, from her heavy and dreamless sleep, by the count, who was now excited and cheerful, with the prospect of being soon far from the presence and power of one whom he suspected to be his rival, and from whom, consequently, he had every thing to fear. Besides his desire for personal liberty, he experienced the intensest anxiety for the safety and happiness of Constanza, whose health and mind, already affected by what she had passed through, he feared would be materially injured, if she should be again exposed to exciting scenes, or, in the morning, meet with disappointment.

He was, therefore, desirous of removing her, at once, to a place of security and quietude.

The old slave was informed of their project, to which she listened with attention and pleasure.

“Old Juana tink, massa Doly better wait till morning come, ’caus if massa Lafitte sa’ he let lily lady and buckra genman go free---dey sure go---as Juana ’tan here—but den, if de lily Missy ’fraid Juana jess go ’long wid her.”

“Thank you, Juana,” said Constanza, “we find, that if escape is possible, we had best leave the cave to-night. In the morning, perhaps, the crew of the vessel might, as they often do, oppose his his commands, and we should then be lost.”

“Juan’ know dat, well ’nough!--How tink you get out, massa Doly?---de guard ’tan at de mouf---de schooner down in de basin, full of men---Its mighty diffikil to get way---Massa Doly,” she said, shaking her head, impressively.

“Speak low, Juana,” said the count. “Listen!” we have thought of this plan. You have a husband on the schooner, I am told. Pass the guard, and say you wish to take some articles of clothing to him---he will permit it---this carpet, and these provisions, to place in the boat, shall pass as the clothing---descend to the vessel---let the watch on deck see you---speak to him, but do not go below---take your opportunity, and drop the articles into the felucca, or the schooner’s boat, if you find it alongside---again speak to the watch, and ply him with this spirit which I give you, tell him you wish to return for something, and that master Théodore may come back with you. Leave the impression, that is, make him believe, that you will soon be there, with Théodore. Tell the guard the same, and do not forget to ply the bottle freely. Then, if you can find a cap and cloak, belonging to Théodore, bring it with you here, and I will then tell you

further our plans. Do you understand what I have said?"

"Is, massa Doly, ol' Juana no fool! She know jiss how to do. Leave Juana to herself."

Taking the flask of spirits, which had been left by the side of the invalid, and muttering, "Juana no de root put in dis, if massa Doly want make sleep come," the old African disappeared in the darkness of the passage. In a few moments her footsteps died away, and the lovers, in silence and expectation, awaited her return.

Half-way through the cave she turned into a niche, in which were many cooking utensils, and, taking a bundle of dry leaves and roots, from an aperture, she dropped a portion in the flask, and pursued her way to the mouth of the grotto.

"Who is there?" said the guard, as the dark form of the old slave emerged from the gloom of the cavern.

"What for you speak so loud and cross, Gil?—nobody but ol' nigger—don't be frighten."

"Diablo!—Juana, you are ugly enough to frighten the devil"—he replied with a loud laugh, "what are you crawling about for this time of night?"

"I want to see my ol' husband—an' car' dese tings to him--You know Gil--I've been among wid dis purty lilly lady, dis more dan week."

"Ah, ha, the Castillian," said Gil with a smile, "she is pretty, Juana—you two together must very well personate light and darkness. But where is the lady that our wise captain loves so well as to give his own share of booty for her ransom?—Sancta Maria! but he must have taken a vow of chastity."

"You mity quisitive Gil--such as you no more shouldnt open your two ugly eye, to look at such a lady---dan notin' at all."

"Ho now Juana---you jealous,"---he replied tapping her on the cheek---"But what have you in that flask---the pure Jamaica or purer Santa Crux---this goes to old blubber lip, the steward, I will wager, I must take a sip to see if it is not too hot for the old boy's stomach. You must be tender of your better half in his old age, Juana.—Ha—peh! peh! but this is made of the true grape. Hold, good Juana! don't be in haste. Let old Crisp sleep, he would rather rest his venerable limbs now, than smack his lips over the best quart of aquardiente he ever stole from the captain's cask"

"Dere Gil, you hab drink 'nough"—she cried interrupting him and seizing the flask "now jess hol' dis tight," she said walking out on a broad plank extending from the terrace to the cross trees of the schooner.

Assisted by Gil the old woman carefully descended the shrouds to the deck, which was strewn with the wearied and sleeping crew.

The watch drowsily leaned against the binnacle with a half-smoked and fireless segar in his lips; but as she approached him, he started when he discovered her by the light of a lantern, which hung in the companion-way.

"Juana, my beauty, are you picking the men's pockets of their spare reals?—come here and let me talk with you!"

"Diego, how you do—it long time I seen you—how is my Crisp?"

"Why, just like yourself, Juana; he grows handsomer as they call the change in Congo, that is, blacker every day."

"Well I'm glad to know dat—I'se come aboard to see him—How long you been on watch, Diego?"

"It is four bells since, and now you've come it's five, my beautiful girl,"—he replied, with mock-gallantry.

"Now jess stop wid dat nonsense, Diego; you're always flattering me—I'se got ol' and wrinkly now."---

"Yet you've broken many a black lover's heart in your day---when you lived in Louisiana; is it not so, bel' Juana?"

"I can't stop talk now---Diego,"---said she complacently, "have you been two hours on watch? and no drink, noffin all time I dare say."

"You say most truly and sadly, good Juana," he replied, "Since Matéo got drunk on watch, and let a barge full of men come aboard of us, there's no more drinking."

"Juana know dat, Diego, well 'nough, and she just bring some---fin to keep the dew from soaking de heart. I don't forget when you nurse my Crisp, when he got he head broke.---Dere, Diego---take two, tree swallow, and gib it back to me."

"Miraculo; my queen of clubs," he replied, gaily, "but you are a goddess! well this is good---madre de dios! where got you such double distilled nectar? but never mind where it come from so that we know where it goes to," he added, placing the mouth of the flask to his own, and quaffing most generous draughts. "Bah, but you are a jewel, Juana. What's that you cast in the boat?" he added suddenly, and looking over the side.

"Only two, tree tings belong to Crisp. I don't like go below, and sturb dem sleep, dere, you tell him in de mornin', his close dere in de boat. Is massa Thèodore 'board?"

"No, it is his next watch too—he'll not be down in time, I fear."

"Neber you fear, Diego, I'll bring him 'long. I'm comin down by and by to bring Crisp he jacket, an I'll wake him, and he'll come wid me. Just gib me one of his cap and him watch coat." Diego readily brought them, and said,

"Well, Juana, you are a nice girl,---stay, let me take another sip at that flask. I would kiss you, Juana, for this," he added, taking the flask from his lips with a sigh; "but the spirit on my breath might give offence. I never kiss, fair Juana, after taking wine, without first smoking the flavour off with genuine Habana."

"Good bye, Diego; I must go; you al'ays mity 'ticular gemman," she replied, turning to go.

"Adios, Juana, my jetty angel! such spiritual visits as your's are always welcome to Diego."

The old slave, satisfied that she had given him enough to intoxicate him, after carefully threading her way through the sleeping crew, slowly ascended the shrouds; while Diego, already excited by his frequent and potent draughts at the mouth of the flask, began to sing a Spanish bacchanalian song, parodied from Moreto, by some Castillian Lyceus, commencing---

Hombres, vino, me mata
Vino es mi muerta y mi vida
Yo, de beber vino, vivo
Y muero, por beber vino.
La ra la, la ra la, la.

"Gil, you gone sleep! fy, Gil! guard go sleep on pos'," said she, stepping on to the terrace, approaching and shaking him, as he leaned against the face of the rock.

"Dimonios! what, old black witch?" he grumbled, illl-humouredly; "gi—give me my aq—a—aquardiente---to, diablo! but it is good," he continued, as he took another draught.

"You hab 'nuff; you drunk now, Gil?" she said inquiringly, wishing to ascertain how far her strata-gem had taken effect.

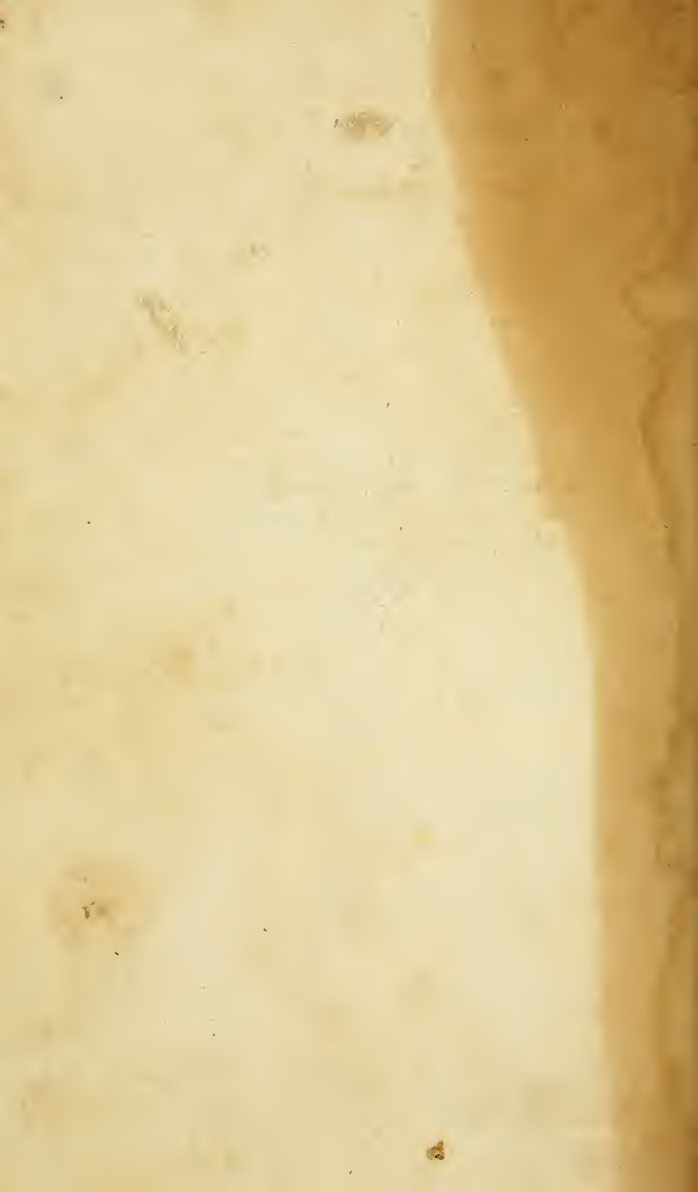
"Give me more, yo---you hag---mor---more, or I'll bl---blow (hiccough) you in t-t-the (hiccough) s-sea---hic, do--hic---do you hear---hugh!" and he drew a

pistol from his belt, and the expression of his face became ferocious.

"Dere, take little sip more, Gil---dere, 'nuff, now;" and she snatched the bottle from him, at the same time dexterously spilling a part of its contents over the priming of both pistols.

"Curse you, Sathan's dam!" he quickly exclaimed; "is that the way you use good liq---liquor." Then, after a pause, he added, incoherently, "how thick the sta---stars are, and what other schoo---schooner's lying side the Gertrude---miraculo! Ju---Juana---you are de---d---double---(hiccough)---gi---gi---give me one of them flasks in your ha---hand," and the intoxicated guard, no longer able to articulate distinctly, or support himself against the wall, slipped gradually from his upright position, and lay upon his side with his cheek resting upon the cold stone.

Satisfied with the manner in which she had obeyed her instructions, the slave hastened into the grotto, where the count and Constanza were waiting her return with apprehension and anxiety.



25.7.8

25.8

25.8

25.8

25.8

25.8

25.8

25.8

